2-1-2011

The Church of the Future: Engaging Theological Entrepreneurship and the Business of Faith

Norman Bullock

Theological Research Exchange Network
(TREN)
P.O. Box 30183
Portland, Oregon 97294
USA
Website: www.tren.com
E-mail: rwjones@tren.com
Phone# 1-800-334-8736

THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE: ENGAGING THEOLOGICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE BUSINESS OF FAITH

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

NORMAN BULLOCK
FEBRUARY 2011

ABSTRACT

The Church of the Future:
Engaging Theological Entrepreneurship and the Business of Faith
Norman Bullock
Doctor of Ministry
School of Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary
2011

This dissertation will explore the "entrepreneurial" role of the "Church of the future" from a theological perspective, with the aim of highlighting for the African-American Church, and potentially the larger Church, the entrepreneurial character of Christian leadership and a theology of holistic ministry, as well as the theological character of the faith, innovation, and collaboration that define entrepreneurship. Churches of the future can take many forms, but they share certain attributes in common: a holistic understanding of the church's mission, dynamic spirituality, and holistic ministry practice. From these areas, this dissertation will evaluate an approach to ministry that looks at the business of faith and theological entrepreneurship as it relates to strategies for renewal, growth, and transformation within the church and the community.

This paper will be divided into three sections. Part One will define the "Church of the Future" and provide the foundation for developing a theology of holistic ministry as it relates to the church's mission and practice of ministry. The first section will conclude with an analysis of the boundaries and barriers of effective holistic ministry within a local church and its community.

Part Two will focus on developing an understanding of the entrepreneurial character of leadership. It will draw leadership lessons from Jesus which portray Jesus as a servant leader, a risk taker, and a public theologian. It will conclude with the development of a theology of leadership from an entrepreneurial perspective.

Part Three will focus on the biblical and theological foundations of the Church of the Future in an effort to derive a clear understanding of its nature and mission. It will draw from Scripture, the African-American church experience, and a consideration of the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ. This section will also present strategies for renewal, growth, and transformation within the Church and the community.

Theological Mentor: Kurt Fredrickson, PhD

Word Count: 303

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is based upon the concept of the local church that understands its role as the holistic center of change where the active presence of the Spirit can be felt, bringing renewal, growth, and transformation both within the church and in the community. The "church of the future" can take many forms, but all forms share certain attributes in common: a holistic understanding of the church's mission, dynamic spirituality, and holistic ministry practice. For the purposes of this paper, "holistic ministry" is defined as a wholehearted embrace and integration of both evangelism and social ministry so that people can experience spiritual renewal, socioeconomic uplift, and transformation of their social context. From these areas, this dissertation will evaluate an approach to ministry that looks at the business of faith and theological entrepreneurship as it relates to strategies for renewal, growth, and transformation within the local church and the community.

If one attends a church regularly or even periodically, he or she is likely aware that local churches can do more than they are currently doing to address needs in their communities. If one catches God's entrepreneurial vision, that person can become an agent for change within the church and the community. Such agents for change can mobilize their churches to connect their missions with the needs of people outside the church walls.

Looking at the business community, the daily work makes one aware of opportunities to touch people's lives with the grace of God. In this line of work, strategies are constantly being formulated to match services with areas of need. As the

work continues in the community, the spiritual and physical needs are more apparent where a church could make a significant difference if only it had a bold vision.

There are two questions that the church of the future needs to ask: "What does God want the local church to be and do?" and "What does God want the local church to be and do that it has not seen?" These are two questions of theological entrepreneurship. The life of theological entrepreneurship sees what others are blind to. This spiritual entrepreneur, that is, one who practices spiritual entrepreneurship, dreams of new realities that others find threatening. He or she identifies needs and opportunities and seeks new ways to meet those needs, with little regard for what already has been tried or has never been attempted in the past.

The world is changing too rapidly for Christian leaders to continue doing things just as they have done them in the past. The United States is no longer a Christian nation, if it ever was one. Past assumptions about spiritual needs and beliefs, religious attitudes and allegiances, no longer hold any weight. All this means that the past ways of doing ministry no longer speak to the needs of most people. If the local church has always done what it has done, churches might be missing opportunities to minister to those who need it the most.

Christians ought to consider some facts about Americans and their changing beliefs. Two of the fastest-growing religions in the United States are Buddhism and Hinduism. The number of adherents in these religious communities has increased by nearly 200 percent in just ten years—from 1990 to 2000.[1] In contrast, the number of

[1] "American Religious Identification Survey," 2001, The Graduate Center, The City University of New York, www.gc.cuny.edu/studies/key_findings.htm (accessed November 14, 2008).

Americans who call themselves Christians increased a mere 5 percent during the same decade.[2] In the same period, the number of Americans who no longer consider themselves religious in any way increased by 110 percent.[3] Further, a 2003 Barna Research Group survey shows that nearly eight million Americans between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine have dropped out of church, have stopped giving money to churches, and are no longer reading their Bibles.[4] While the number alone is staggering, the implications for the future of Christian ministry are frightening. A major segment of the next generation of leaders in this country is immune to typical church ministry and deaf to the conventional methods of presenting the gospel.

David Kinnaman, vice president of the Barna Research Group and director of the survey, said Christianity is not going to dry up and blow away – after all, there are still more than ten million Americans in their twenties who regularly attend church. The real issue, according to Kinnaman,

> is how churches will respond to the faith quakes that are reverberating through our nation's young adults. The notion that these people will return to the church when they get older or once they become parents is only true in a minority of cases. More important, the reasoning ignores the real issue: Millions of twenty-somethings are crystallizing their views of life without the input of church leaders, the Bible, or other mature Christians. If we simply wait for them to come back to church later in adulthood, not only will most of these people never return, but also we would miss the chance to alter their life trajectory during a critical phase.[5]

---

[2] "American Religious Identification Survey," 2001.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Barna Research Group, "Twentysomethings Struggle to Find Their Place in Christian Churches," September 24, 2003, www.barna.org (accessed November 14, 2008).

[5] Ibid.

If this generation cannot be reached with the gospel by remaining within the walls of the church, and all the signs indicate that it cannot, then it is time for the church to recreate itself, to redefine itself from the perspectives of faith and entrepreneurship. This dissertation will look at ways to take the local church to the community. And in this conversation about churches, it is not just the twenty-something generation that is being missed. There is the immigrant population, the teen population, those who have grown up with no Christian influence and thus no familiarity with religion, and many, many others. Very few of these people will ever be affected by what goes on during a church service, no matter how dynamic, upbeat, and relevant the service is. Those who are following Buddhism or Hinduism, those who claim no religion, those who have been wounded in life (sometimes, even by a church), and the lost will not typically venture into a church. These people have no reason to think they will find any answers there. They still have tremendous need to experience the awesome reality of God's love, but they will not come begging.

Status-quo ministry says, "Open the doors and they'll come." That might have worked in the past, but it long ago lost its effectiveness. Churches can no longer just schedule church services and programs and wait for those who need God to show up. Churches must find constructive ways to engage the non-churchgoers in their communities. Churches must take the gospel out of the church and to the people. Members of local churches must become entrepreneurs as they practice their faith. If local churches refuse to take this step, they run the risk of losing millions who desperately need and want to experience the love of God and who live right in the neighborhoods that surround these churches.

It is time for all stakeholders—pastors, laypersons, and businesses concerned about the needs of their communities—to start dreaming about how God can use them in new ways. Those ways may be scary at times, but the adventures will be exciting as well. God is working in the world, and God invites believers to join him. But God does not limit himself to tried-and-true methods, and God never shies away from disruptive innovation. In fact, as will be discussed throughout this dissertation, it could easily be argued that God prefers bold, people-focused initiatives that fly in the face of convention. Jesus' entrepreneurship opened people's eyes to spiritual truth in startling, unsettling, but welcome ways.

This dissertation will explore the shift from static, status-quo faith to bold, outward-focused entrepreneurial faith. This is the starting point for defining the church of the future, a place where passions can be ignited and innovative partnerships can be developed to launch new ventures for God. In the chapters to follow, a practical but powerful blueprint to help people of faith move out of the sanctuary and into the neighborhood will be crafted. This approach is described in Scripture, and it works with effectiveness in any locale. It works with equal force in organizations of any size and when launching any type of new ministry.

This study is heightened by the entrepreneurial explosion that is underway in the souls of individuals who live in cities, suburbs, or small towns. These souls might have access to millions of dollars in capital or be so poor that the widow's last two cents look like a fortune. This discourse looks at power of these souls together, as the local church, which can look at the darkness of its community and long to light it up.

The church of the future is that church that engages and embraces the business of faith and theological entrepreneurship. Before moving forward in this treatise, it is important to understand what entrepreneurial faith is not. Entrepreneurial faith is not about numbers, not about growth plans, not about increasing the offerings. Entrepreneurial faith is not just for those who are looking for a way to convert their small congregations into mega-churches. Entrepreneurial faith is all about confronting challenges and obstacles and believing that God is bigger than anything that tries to oppose God's work. It understands that God's ways are not our ways. It is trusting that God's vision is clearer and brighter than ours, and that his timing is more perfect than ours. It demands courage to develop and implement bold strategies to accomplish new visions. In short, entrepreneurial faith is for anyone—pastor, or layperson, in any size community, in any church, with any amount of resources or lack of resources. It is about God, not about us.

This coupling of the business of faith and theological entrepreneurship is not just about having a dream or receiving a vision from God. It is acting on the dreams and visions that God gives. An entrepreneur implements ideas with new strategies as he or she pursues new visions. God's strategies for his prophets were new, sometimes confusingly so. Imagine having to marry a prostitute in order to show God's incredible grace to his unfaithful people. Hosea did that when he married a harlot. That is entrepreneurial.

The Heart of the Church of the Future

To further argue the case for the church of the future, land will be used as an example. The goal of theological entrepreneurship is not more land, bigger sanctuaries, or a larger congregation. The heart of theological entrepreneurship is the hearts of individuals. God is interested in transformed hearts. Chapter 6 of this dissertation will cite examples of churches who champion this entrepreneurial faith through their efforts of amassing land, but through this process change the hearts of people.

The Profile of an Entrepreneur

An entrepreneur, in the best sense of the word, is one who is not satisfied with the way things are and who refuses to stand on the sidelines doing nothing about it. A true entrepreneur is not necessarily one who makes money, but one who uses his or her skills, expertise, and knowledge and passion to make life better for others. An entrepreneur is one who finds a niche, seizes the opportunity, and adds value to the community.

One of the earliest definitions of entrepreneur had nothing to do with money. Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter's definition emphasized innovation, including new products, new manufacturing processes, and new uses for existing products. He talked about galvanizing human capital for new enterprises.[6] Entrepreneurship is about seeing, sizing, and seizing opportunities. This means taking on challenges in a new way – acting boldly and taking risks – while expecting new results that improve people's lives. Change stands at the heart of entrepreneurship. If one risks nothing more than

[6] Jospeh A. Schumpeter, *The Theory of Economic Development: An Inquiry into Profits, Capital, Credit, Interest and Business Cycle,* trans R. Ople (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1934).

what he or she has always risked, that individual will get nothing more than what he or she has always gotten.

Entrepreneurial faith requires looking at one's community, one's ministry, one's relationships, and one's entire life in a completely new way. It embraces opportunities to step out of the usual into the exciting, and sometimes into the fearful and unknown. It is living life on the edge and loving the view.

For the purposes of this dissertation, a working definition of "entrepreneur" must be established. In the business community, an entrepreneur is most often defined as "an agent of change," "a person who adds value," "one who moves forward with creativity and passion," and "a person who is comfortable with risk." While all of these phrases fit the normal definition of entrepreneur, they fall short. Those who immerse themselves in entrepreneurial faith can anticipate a total transformation – leaving the comfortable status quo to become change agents, adding value through creatively and passionately launching bold initiatives, all the while taking calculated risks for God. Those last two words are crucial. Serving God in entrepreneurship is what sets believers' work apart from a business venture or a financial enterprise. The work of entrepreneurial faith is done on earth, but it is spiritual in nature. It is done by humans guided by God, and it produces eternal results.

People of entrepreneurial faith are those who see what God wants them to see, believe in what they see, and do it. All are entrepreneurial when they are seeing, sizing up, and seizing opportunities for God. People who pursue this life launch initiatives that respond to real needs, take advantage of opportunities that fit the vision that God gives, create services that meet real needs, and – most important – affect lives that are destined

for eternity. While some of the strategies overlap with entrepreneurship in the business world, the goal far surpasses anything one will ever accomplish in a business enterprise. The goal is nothing short of expanding God's Kingdom on earth.

If this entrepreneurial life sounds daunting and completely undoable, or merely naïve, it is important to note that the life of entrepreneurial faith is not a solitary venture. The key to succeeding in this risky venture is enlisting and joining forces with a group of life-minded comrades, gifted and passionate generalists and specialists who help define the mission, help assess needs, analyze opportunities, and work together in meeting human needs and ministering in their community.

Digging Deeper to Understand Entrepreneurial Faith

Robert Putnam, the Mulkin Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University, has explored the disappearance of "social capital," referring to human values such as trustworthiness, acceptance, mutual aid, and networking, which we experience as a society. "Beginning, roughly speaking, in the late 1960s," writes Putnam, "Americans in massive numbers began to join less, trust less, give less, vote less, and schmoose less."[7] He notes that over the past thirty-plus years, membership in churches, as well as civic and social clubs, has fallen by 25 to 50 percent. "A variety of technological and economic and social changes – television, two-career families, urban sprawl, and so on – has rendered obsolete a good share of America's stock of social capital," Putnam concludes.[8]

[7] Robert Putnam and Lewis Feldstein, *Better Together: Restoring the American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2003), 4.

[8] Ibid.

In this dissertation, the term "community" will be used rather than "social capital," although both terms refer to people banding together. In entrepreneurial faith Christians band together to identify opportunities, and then use their passion and expertise to meet the needs of those around them. The work of spiritual entrepreneurship is done as a community.

But the recipients of this bold ministry are also in a community. The communities of people who need the touch of God's grace, through the work of God's people, can be considered any gathering of people around a common theme, be it geographical region, vocation, education, hobbies, or any number of other lifestyle categories. Each person lives in several communities, interacting daily with others in these groups. Community includes the people one associates with regularly, those one shares life with.

Community is important because God purposefully places each person where he or she is—geographically and relationally. He wants believers to be salt and light in this world. God delays his work of separating the wheat from the weeds, choosing instead to let the wheat live next to the weeds. As believers live in these communities, they have the privilege of introducing the life-giving and life-changing Kingdom-of-God principles to those who live in a flawed and fallen world.

The entrepreneurial-faith community is called to reach out to these other communities, the communities that each person inhabits through his or her various involvements. According to Putnam, those who attend church regularly "are much more likely that other people to visit friends, to entertain at home, to attend club meetings, and

to belong to sports groups."[9] In other words, those who are more serious about their faith are the same people who seek out others and form community with them. In considering why this is so, Putnam hypothesizes that churchgoers know more people and thus become aware of more opportunities. This is certainly part of the answer.

But the complete answer lies much deeper. Christians, those born into new life by the grace of God and the Holy Spirit, bear in their beings the heart of Jesus. And Jesus, at his core, is the ultimate entrepreneur who goes into all communities to meet and care for the needy. Believers need to take the example of Jesus, the ultimate entrepreneur. When they do this, the Christian Church will be the Church of the future.

[9] Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 67.

PART ONE

A PROFILE OF THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE:

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO MINISTRY

CHAPTER 1

FAITH AND THE CITY

Faith and Holistic Ministry

"Faith and the city" is another way of saying "entrepreneurial faith." Maintaining the status quo in the city serves neither God nor the people that God loves. Entrepreneurial faith pursues the possibilities of what can be in the cities that believers serve. Christians are the ambassadors of the Kingdom of God in the places where they live and serve. Christian faith – belief and trust in Jesus Christ – should move believers to take the local church to the community. Holistic ministry is finding creative ways to engage the un-churched in one's community. Believers must take their faith, which has its foundation in the gospel, outside the four walls of the church to the people and become entrepreneurs as they practice their faith.

Although holistic congregations have common theological roots and share several key characteristics, each church grows out of different soil – its denomination, community context, leadership, available resources, ethnic heritage, and congregational culture – and bears different fruit. Each church's journey toward holistic ministry is unique and is marked by different joys and challenges. A church's ministry is also

shaped by a sense of its particular calling and by a range of theological beliefs that shade how holistic mission is interpreted and implemented.

This means that holistic churches are quite diverse. One cannot predict where they will be found, or what ethnic group will fill the pews, or whether they will sing hymns or contemporary choruses, or which political party they will endorse. Nor can one associate holistic churches with a particular type of ministry. In fact, churches that foster a holistic mission may not all agree on the "right" priorities for ministry or on the best ways to share the gospel. But they will all affirm that the Church must share the gospel and that community outreach is a priority. Virtually every strand of biblical truth calls Christians to link word and deed, in proclaiming and demonstrating the Good News of Christ's reign. Jesus' example, Jesus' commands, and Jesus' gospel reveal that Christians are to love the whole person the way that Jesus did.

The Church of the future is called to holistic ministry, which is a wholehearted embrace and integration of both evangelism and social ministry so that people can experience spiritual renewal, socioeconomic uplift, and transformation of their social context. To spread the kingdom of God is more than simply winning people to Christ. It is also working for the healing of persons, families, and relationships. It is doing deeds of mercy and seeking justice. It is ordering lives and relationships and institutions and communities according to God's authority to bring in the blessedness of the kingdom. The presence of the kingdom of God is the means for the renewal of the entire world and dimensions of life. The early twentieth century saw a bitter falling-out between fundamentalists and followers of the social gospel. The division affects the Church to this day. One branch, quoting the Great Commission, claims that nothing is as important

as leading individuals to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. These Christians see evangelism as the primary task of the Church. The other side points to the parable of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25: 31-46. There Jesus declares to those who fail to meet people's needs "You that are accursed, depart from me!" (v. 41).[1] This side stresses that the calling of Christians is to care for those who are poor and seek justice. Both sides have it partly right, but neither has the whole picture. These selective readings of Scripture and interpretations of the Church's mission have led to lopsided Christianity.

Holistic ministry overcomes this long-standing divide by reaching out with the whole gospel in both word and deed. In this sense, the church of the future loves not only "in word or speech, but also in truth and action" (1 John 3:18). The church of the future that engages in holistic ministry is that church that understands its role as the holistic center of change where the active presence of the Spirit can be felt, bringing renewal, growth, and transformation both within the church and in the community. The church of the future can take many forms, but it shares certain attributes with other "churches of the future": a holistic understanding of the church's mission, dynamic spirituality, and holistic ministry practice. From these areas, this dissertation will evaluate an approach to ministry that revisits the mission of the church of Jesus Christ as it relates to strategies for renewal, growth, and transformation within the local church and the community.

All throughout urban America, in our cities, a new urbanism is on the move. New urbanism is nothing more than creating livable and sustainable communities. The market is responding to its insights, and even the government is slowly getting on board. The

[1] All biblical quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version, unless otherwise noted.

Church, however, has a distinct role to play in this movement as it relates to urban planning and "seeking the welfare of the city." This provides an excellent opportunity for the Church to increase its evangelism efforts in this renewed urban context. There is a need for Christians to be increasingly vigilant with regard to justice concerns as new urbanism affects residential patterns in this country. It is for the explicit benefit of the Kingdom of God that believers pursue these ends. There is a need to pursue community economic development as Christians are the stewards of some very important and useful public spaces within most urban areas. Historic churches, for example, represent some of the most beautiful and graceful landmarks in the heart of American cities. And they continue to provide viable public gathering spaces for all kinds of neighborhood groups.[2]

Unfortunately, many congregations have already abandoned (or are giving serious consideration to abandoning) these important urban settings for greener pastures of the suburbs. Although doing effective ministry in the suburbs is important as people move to the suburbs, this should not involve the abandonment of the urban church buildings. Urban churches are important anchors in the city. There are many buildings in urban cities that are abandoned or in need of rehabilitation. Rehabilitating them could include converting them to affordable housing, health centers, job training centers, and other community centers would serve in "seeking the welfare of the city." At the very least, Christians should hold on to them.

Over the last two or three decades there have been multiple shifts within the life of the inner city. Changes in the economy, the political landscape, inner-city land grabs,

[2] The information for this discussion was gained from my attending the New Urbanism Conference in June 2006 in Providence, Rhode Island, hosted by the Congress of New Urbanism.

and a shift from community-based churching to commuter-based churching has taken its toll on congregational life. Lack of space for expansion, inadequate parking, and the increase in overall crime statistics has made attending church in the inner city a less than desirable choice. There are many that doubt the relevance of the Church.

An existing rebirth is underway in many of the urban centers across the country. The church of the future is and will continue to play a significant role in this new life. The church of the future is being revitalized and reoriented to new ministries. Neighborhoods are being rebuilt; new housing is being constructed; businesses are being created; and new schools and community-based health care centers are being established. Communities are coming to new life and taking charge of their futures. Across the country churches are involved in transformation, seeking to give voice to the people and pastors of urban congregations that are creatively living faithfully as Christians in the city.

Identifying with a specific neighborhood helps a congregation make concrete its willingness to be for the city—rather than being a church against the city, disdaining its evils; a church above the city, caring only about heavenly and not earthly realities; or a church in the city, so accommodating to its values as to be indistinguishable from it.[3] Some churches have a lopsided emphasis on social ministry. Other churches have a one-sided focus on evangelism. But most churches simply do too little of both. A church cannot have holistic outreach ministry if it has no outreach. Thus, a key place to start growing a holistic congregation is to cultivate a commitment to reaching out beyond the walls of the church, as a central expression of the congregation's faith and worship.

[3] Amy L. Sherman, *Restorers of Hope* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997), 242.

Despite the overall movement toward a holistic understanding of the gospel in the last few decades, too many churches still neglect outreach mission. Christian activist Harold Fray makes the comment that by observing where many churches spend their energy, money, and time, one would think that John 3:16 read: "God so loved the *church* that he gave his only Son." But of course, the text really says, "God so loved the *world* that he gave his only Son." Church leaders do have a significant responsibility toward the members of the church, but one key dimension of this responsibility "is to lead them into their vocation (mission) in the world, which God loves, and for which Christ died."[4]

There are two main hurdles to overcome for a church to become a mission-oriented church, that is, a church that shares God's self-sacrificial love for the lost, lonely, and broken, and cultivates a commitment toward outreach as an expression of worship. The first hurdle is an inward focus that keeps the church from reaching out to the community. The second hurdle includes the barriers (of geography, demographics, race, class, and culture) that keep the church from being inclusive of the community.

It is important at this point to clarify the term "community." Churches on the same city block may come up with different answers to the question, What is your ministry community? Amy Sherman identifies three types of churches in terms of the way they define their communities of ministry. "Settlers" concentrate on the neighborhoods where their churches are physically located and "work for the transformation of these neighborhoods from the inside out."[5] "Gardeners" develop ministry ties with neighborhoods outside their immediate area, which they view "as

[4] Harold R. Fray Jr., *Conflict and Change in the Church* (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1969), 21-2.

[5] Amy Sherman, *Restorers of Hope: Reaching the Poor in Your Church with Church-Based Ministries That Work* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004), 48-9.

extensions of their own churches (spiritual homes), in the same way that homeowners view their gardens as an extension of their houses."[6] For instance, a suburban church might reach out to cultivate a particular inner-city neighborhood. "Shepherds," explains Sherman, "primarily serve one targeted population . . . rather than a specific geographic neighborhood."[7] A church with a commitment to Haitian immigrants, for example, might have ministries spanning several neighborhoods. Ronald Sider, who presents Sherman's categories in his book, *Churches that Make a Difference*, contends that any one of the three types is valid.[8]

In summary, therefore, "community" refers to the particular area where the church concentrates its ministry, whether that means the neighborhood where the church is located, where members live, and/or where outreach is targeted. This dissertation focuses primarily on churches who ministry to a geographic neighborhood, but in most instances "community" could be understood as a particular people group as well. Churches should be cautioned, however, against defining different "neighbors" for different aspects of ministries, for example, meeting needs *here* while targeting evangelistic ministry *there.* This could send a mixed message to each community: "God cares about your needs, but you are not good enough for our church," or "God loves you but is only interested in your spirit." A holistic approach ministers across the spectrum of needs in a community.

---

[6] Sherman, *Restorers of Hope*.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ronald Sider, *Churches That Make A Difference* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002), 146.

It should also be noted that while the focus of this paper is local community outreach, that does not diminish the importance of global missions as well. Churches must not be blind to the needs of the rest of the world, particularly desperately poor third world countries and totalitarian societies that are closed to the gospel. On the other hand, some churches dedicate all their missional energies to other lands while neglecting God's children in their own backyards. Holistic ministry calls for a balance of local and global mission.

Learning to Study Our Cities: A Theological Approach

In the development of the church of the future, one must be able to study the community context. Theology has traditionally focused on individuals while forgetting that individuals are created to live in community. It is impossible to love the whole person without paying attention to his or her context. Evangelicalism, notes Ray Bakke in his book, *A Theology as Big as the City*, has had "a theology of persons and persons, but it lacked a conscious theology of place."[9] Trying to do holistic ministry and develop the church of the future without carefully studying the community context is as unwise as interpreting a particular Bible verse out of context. The church of the future must learn to do "exegesis of environment."[10] A church must become a student of a community in order to become its servant. A study of the city has five main goals: to guide strategic planning and the development of new ministries; to help understand the forces that affect the lives of people in the community; to help understand community factors that

[9] Ray Bakke, *A Theology as Big as the City* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1997), 60.

[10] Ray Bakke and Sam Roberts, *The Expanded Mission of City Center Churches* (Chicago: International Urban Associates, 1998), 55.

influence the effectiveness of church ministries; to help understand how the church of the future itself is affected by the community; and to discern how the church of the future is perceived by the community.

Goal One: To Guide Strategic Planning and the Development of New Ministries

Without a community assessment, ministry designs may be flawed. Effective ministry depends on an accurate diagnosis of the need. Timothy Keller, in his book, *Ministries of Mercy*, provides a helpful metaphor:

> In some ways, trying to devise a program to help "the poor" is something like asking a doctor to prescribe medicine for "sickness." There is no cure for "sickness," because it is only a general term for many specific conditions. In the same way, the poor is really a vast heading for numerous specific conditions. A systematic assessment of the community helps us identify and pinpoint the characteristics of difference target groups of people.[11]

While some "target groups" are obvious (homeless persons, nursing home residents, prisoners), some needs lie below the surface. "Every community has people who are ignored, marginalized, or simply out of side," writes Carl Dudley in his helpful book, *Basic Steps toward Community Ministry.*[12] Such people include seniors making ends meet on meager pensions, undocumented workers fearful of deportation, divorcees coping with emotional and financial loss, parents worn down by caring simultaneously for children and ailing parents, people with mental illness, low-skilled workers scraping by on low-wage jobs, and latch-key children. Uncovering these pockets of pain and tracing their causes can change a church's ministry priorities.

---

[11] Timothy J. Keller, *Ministries of Mercy: The Call of the Jericho Road,* 2nd ed. (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1997), 145.

[12] Carl S. Dudley, *Basic Steps toward Community Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute, 1991), 2.

Since communities are always in flux, a study of the city also helps anticipate a future trajectory for outreach. Churches often struggle to keep up with entrenched problems. The church of the future has the opportunity to get ahead of the game by preparing to respond to the needs just beginning to emerge. For example, if demographic trends reveal a large increase in the number of young, married homeowners, a church could begin planning for day care and after-school programs. Information improves a church's ability to make prudent, strategic investments with its ministry resources.

Goal Two: To Help Understand the Forces That Affect the Lives of People in the Community

Individuals are profoundly influenced by the demographic, cultural, and organizational dynamics of their communities. The city environment not only governs residents' access to basic essentials such as jobs and housing, but it always conveys a message about residents' value and worth. A city can either affirm or undermine the image of God in people. This is not to say that the environment determines a person's worldview or choices. God gives individuals free will and holds them accountable for their actions, regardless of their context. However, the social context influences what choices people are faced with, the options they perceive are available to them, and the resources they use in exercising their choices.

One of the "quiet and nameless" forces is the availability of "social capital." Social capital consists, writes Nancy Ammerman in *Congregation and Community*, "[in part] of trust and mutual obligation, in part of information gathered and available, and in

part of norms that encourage pro-social and discourage antisocial behaviors."[13] Social capital operates like financial capital, as a building block for accomplishing goals for the residents of the community. A healthy civil society shapes the community's moral values, provides crucial social support, and attracts the investment of outside resources into the community. "Community cohesion" is a key factor in preventing violence in a community. A cohesive community is one in which people look out for their neighbors' children and take pride in keeping their streets clean. Another necessity is healthy links between the community and the rest of the world. When a community is cut off from outside resources and cultural influences, it becomes as stagnant as a weed-choked pond. Tools that measure a community's social health can help the church of the future to find ways of naming and talking about the "invisible" barriers to community restoration.[14]

Goal Three: To Help Understand Community Factors That Influence the Effectiveness of Church Ministries

There are many ways that a community can influence the church of the future's effectiveness and opportunities for ministry. Demographic changes, job losses, foreclosures, political battles, zoning laws – all these can affect (for better or for worse) a church's outreach. Researching community assets (both secular and faith-based) allows a church to connect with other resources, to prevent the duplication of services, and to identify political allies such as neighborhood groups and block clubs. The culture of a community is also a factor to be taken into account, particularly when a congregation is

[13] Nancy Ammerman, *Congregation and Community* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 347.

[14] See, for example, Rachele Warren and Donald Warren, *The Neighborhood Organizers Handbook* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 1977).

from a different ethnic or class background. If the church of the future is not aware of these external influences, it may too quickly become discouraged or fight the wrong battles. On the flip side, failing to note the contribution of contextual factors to a program's success may leave church members wondering why a program that has succeeded elsewhere does not work when it is replicated in a different setting. The church of the future is most effective when contextual information shapes its planning and when its ministries are responsive to feedback from the community.

Goal Four: To Help Understand How the Church of the Future Itself Is Affected by the Community

Believers often think about the church as salt and light, as an agent of change in a community. Such a view is, after all, the point of outreach ministry. But a church's surroundings also affect the church. The relationship between church and community is what socialists call an "open system," with reciprocal lines of influence. That is why it is important to understand how the church's specific geographic and cultural setting has helped to shape its identity. Nancy Ammerman and her colleagues, in their book, *Studying Congregations*, explain, "The more leaders and members are helped to see and understand the power of the context on their congregation's life and their participation in it, the greater the possibility they have of cultivating amore responsible and effective expression of their faith commitments."[15] As Ammerman has found, churches that are

[15] Nancy T. Ammerman, Jackson W. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney, *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 42-3.

willing to accept and adapt to changing environmental factors remain more viable than the ones that stubbornly resist all adaptation as "compromise."[16]

Goal Five: To Discern How the Church of the Future Is Perceived by the Community

Taking the pulse of the community gives the church of the future the opportunity to see itself from the community's perspective. Churches are sometimes woefully unaware of their reputation in the community. A church may consider itself a model of compassion and integrity, while local residents perceive only that church members are rude drivers and park their cars in the neighbors' driveways. On the other hand, the church may not know that the community still associates the church with the dedicated outreach of a prior generation. The community's point of view is certainly not the truth about the congregation. But it can represent a stepping stone or a barrier to building effective ministries

To build effective ministry, writes Carl Dudley in his book, *Basic Steps toward Community Ministry*, "We must see the world as clearly as possible. Otherwise our familiarity and our prejudices will bind us to the past and blind us to problems, trends, and new possibilities."[17] Tools to help in the study of the city include census data and other published reports, maps, surveys, interviews, focus groups, and observations.

[16]Ammerman, *Congregations and Community*.

[17] Carl S. Dudley, *Basic Steps toward Community Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute, 1991), 77.

Indicators of Faith and the City

As a profile of the church of the future is developed, various characteristics should be apparent. These indicators include love for God and neighbor, a commitment to reaching out beyond the walls of the church, spiritual and relational vitality within the congregation, a visionary leadership team, mission-centered organizational practices, and ministry partnerships. These pieces are all vital to the church of the future that wants to fulfill its mission of loving its community in wholeness.

The church of the future has a clear understanding of its mission. The holistic church teaches a ministry vision that integrates discipleship, evangelism, and social action, and it works toward both spiritual and social transformation. It supports a spectrum of social action that includes charity, compassion, community development, public policy, and justice advocacy, addressing both individual and systematic sources of human problems. Further, the church of the future sees ministry as fundamentally relational, seeking to develop long-term relationships with ministry recipients and welcoming them into church fellowship. It views its mission as both local and global in scope.

The church of the future has a dynamic spirituality. This holistic ministry centers congregational life around passionate worship of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, celebrating salvation by grace through faith in Christ and relying on the power of God's spirit for fruitful ministry. This ministry nurtures individual members in a deepening spiritual life of worship, prayer, study, and mutual discipleship. Finally, the church of the future shares God's self-sacrificial love for the lost, lonely, and broken, and it cultivates a commitment toward outreach as an expression of worship.

Another indicator of faith and the city is a cultivation of loving, accountable, reconciling relationships. These relationships are balanced with internal nurture, discipling and uniting members through participation in the church's mission. A holistic church selects, develops, and upholds church leaders with faith, vision, courage, integrity, and a passion for holistic mission.

Another attribute of a holistic church involved in the city is that is calls, trains, equips, and organizes members for ministry, building on the full range of spiritual gifts. It sustains ministry through mission-centered organizational systems, effective resource management, and visionary planning. It ministers with an informed appreciation for its community context and with a spirit of sacrificial servanthood, humility, and boldness in relationship to the community. When all these pieces are put together, faith and the city results: a church that practices both evangelism and social ministry; balances nurture and outreach; knows and loves its community; clearly communicates its theology and specific vision for holistic mission; integrates the holistic vision into the internal life of the church; builds its ministry on a base of spiritual maturity and healthy, loving relationships; and calls and equips its members to action.

Cultivating a Theology of Holistic Ministry

Holistic ministry is concerned with the whole person, including spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical dimensions. It is also concerned with the social realm including issues of political and economic justice, across lines of race, class, and gender. God does not restrict his grace to the soul, but watches over every aspect of one's well being. All the pieces of our lives – financial, emotional, relational,

professional, physical and spiritual pieces – will be in sync, not as pieces of some convoluted puzzle but as pieces fitting harmoniously together as a whole. We cannot continue to preach happy sermons and not prepare people for the world. Jesus Christ forms the foundation for holistic ministry from whom the message of the Scripture speaks to current situations.

The foundations of holistic ministry start with Jesus Christ, beginning with Luke 4:18-19, where Jesus recaptures Isaiah 61:1-2 and begins his public ministry. The ministry of Jesus Christ is holistic. He looked at the entire person. He also was concerned with the individual's proper relation to others. This is true of primary relations in families and small groups. Jesus had a concern for human welfare that reached beyond interpersonal to the systemic. Jesus had a public ministry that defended the underserved.[18]

Any discussion of developing a theology should begin with the ministry of Jesus Christ. Holistic ministry at its best should mirror the characteristics and the mind of Jesus Christ to the fullest extent possible by God's grace. The church that Jesus founded is an extension of the incarnation. Jesus is viewed by Christians as God's supreme salvific revelation to humans through fleshly and historical embodiment.[19] The Church is the means by which that revelation is manifest in community and throughout history. This being so, the local church becomes important as the context of ministry. It is through the local church's mission and ministry that God's will is to be done on earth.

---

[18] Robert M. Franklin, *Another Day's Journey* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 23.

[19] J. Deotis Roberts, *The Prophethood of Black Believers* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), 45-46

The ministry of Jesus was personal, social, and public – it was holistic in the most comprehensive sense. As the distinguished theologian J. Deotis Roberts notes, the ministry of Jesus was priestly, prophetic, and public.[20] By looking at Jesus as the example, holistic ministry helps believers to know themselves in relation to God, which is personal salvation, and it helps believers to serve others by answering life's most basic questions about value (What am I doing with my life that makes a difference?), identity (Who am I?), and purpose (Why am I here?).[21]

Jesus stood between worlds, representing the distinctive vision and virtues of Christianity to a secular culture. Christians stand in their faith traditions to address people from all walks of life. Using Jesus as a model, believers move into the public arena (the community) with a profound sense of humility, reverence for the sacredness of people and traditions, and in view of their manifold limitations, a sense of humor about Christians' noble calling. The community aspect of Jesus' ministry is the social component of holistic ministry. Christ served as an anointed spiritual guide because he led people to a deeper experience of God. He was humankind's mediator with God. Second, Jesus was a grassroots intellectual who initiated and encouraged informed public discussion. Third, Jesus was a civic enabler who understood how to empower neighborhoods both through the political system. Jesus' public ministry is an intensification of his prophetic and holistic ministry. When one takes seriously the life and ministry of Jesus, one finds in that ministry the basis for a ministry with a public

---

[20] J. Deotis Roberts, *Ministry for Social Crisis: Theology and Praxis of the Black Church Tradition* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1993), 45.

[21] Kirbyjohn Caldwell, *The Gospel of Good Success* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 19.

dimension. It is holistic. A view of Christology that misses the life and witness of Jesus during his days here on earth cannot do justice to the public dimensions of the ministry of Jesus and what this implies as far as his public ministry is concerned.[22] The ministry of Jesus goes beyond the ability to comprehend. Christian ministry cannot be profound, complete, and holistic unless believers take seriously these aspects of ministry of Jesus and seek to mirror them in their ministry in his name.

Furthermore, the priestly aspect of the ministry of Jesus also contributes to the discussion of Christ in relation to God and community. Historically, the role of a priest is to provide comfort and assurance to those who are suffering or in trouble. In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus includes in what has been considered his commission to ministry the statement: "He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted." Because of sin, our relationship with God, ourselves, others, and creation are broken. Through the atoning work of Christ on the cross, healing is possible for these broken relationships.

One active area of ministry that is essential to holistic ministry and to which Jesus demonstrated a priestly aspect of ministry was healing.[23] Jesus showed concern for all types of people in all walks of life through his healing ministry. In fact, healing was so characteristic of the ministry of Jesus that he was dismissed or misunderstood by those who expected a different form of ministry. The ministry of Jesus included all persons who came before him. There was a sense that each and every person, regardless of race, sex, or class was equally valuable in his presence. If he had an option it was for the needy. But there is no indication that he accepted sinfulness anywhere. His heart was

---

[22] Roberts, *Ministry for Social Crisis*, 89.

[23] Roberts, *The Prophethood of Black Believers*, 123.

always filled with compassion. Wherever believers have been faithful to their callings, they have proclaimed personal salvation. It has been a channel of God's healing to those in physical and emotional need.

Not only was Jesus a priest, he was a prophet. Jesus Christ advocated for social justice which is an essential for holistic ministry. Jesus challenged his hearers to embody in their convictions and lifestyles the substance of God's requirements. His speaking in parables was his way of walking the walk and talking the talk of the people of his time. In order to increase his disciples, he had to be familiar with the sights, sounds, nuances, and feeling tones of the people and culture and speak the language of the people so as to reach and move them. The prophetic aspects of this endeavor are manifested in the willingness to be honest about the nature of one's being and existence, to shed the layers of pretense which inevitably shroud blacks who live in white society. As I can remember from my days in Sunday school, the prophets of old, always stripping themselves ontologically bare, unpretentiously stood before God and the community of believers, and owned in every way who and what they were. They did not negate their identities in order to appease the existing political powers.

Jesus knew better than anyone that each person he encountered has an immortal soul in need of salvation. Yet story after story in the Gospels depicts Jesus devoting many hours of potential preaching time to healing sick bodies. Of course, he also preached and taught. But the space that the Gospel writers devote to stories of healing indicates that God incarnate had a high view of the importance of meeting people's physical needs. Furthermore, the texts often point out that Jesus ministered because he

had compassion on hurting people (Mt 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; Mk 1:41). He did not perform acts of healing simply to entice people to hear his message.

But Jesus' ministry went beyond touching individuals. Though Jesus did not start a political party or reform campaign, his teachings and practices made it clear that his new messianic community would feature radically different social, economic, and political arrangements. In all kinds of ways, Jesus challenged the status quo of his time: its view of women, wealth, power leadership, and violence.[24] Jesus' example calls the Church to follow in pursuing a new vision of a just, peaceful, and equitable society.

A fourth biblical doctrine that is important in the cultivation of a theology of holistic ministry is salvation. God's salvation is available every day of the week. Thomas Oden, in his book, *Life in the Spirit*, discusses holistic salvation as repentance, faith, justification, and regeneration. Oden talks about salvation from a personal perspective.[25] The doctrine of salvation reached its fulfillment in the death of Christ on our behalf. Jesus' mission was to save the world from sin and the wrath of God. Salvation draws its meaning from deliverance from sin or a healing of a sin-sick condition. True salvation is an active salvation that has faith at its core. Salvation involves the whole person, body and soul. Salvation also includes the restoration of wholesome community among Christians. Its effects spill over into the entire social order. At Christ's return, even the creation itself will be restored to wholeness (Rm 8:19-23).

---

[24] Sider, *Churches That Make a Difference*, 46.

[25] Oden, *Life in the Spirit*.

At the center of the biblical teaching on salvation is the glorious gift of justification through faith in Christ. It is only because Jesus took our place on the cross that we dare to look into the face of God as forgiven sinners, confident that we will live forever in his presence. If a renewed personal relationship with God were all there was to God's salvation, we would gladly embrace it. Repeatedly, persistently, however, the Bible teaches that salvation is something far broader.[26]

The Old Testament words for salvation show that salvation has strong social and physical aspects. God's salvation includes liberation from oppression, material prosperity, and justice for those in poverty, as well as the continued historical existence of the redeemed community, the people of Israel. The same is true in the New Testament. In Luke, for example, the words for salvation refer to forgiveness for a fallen woman (7:50), the healing of a gentile soldier's servant (7:3), and the restoration to life a dead girl (8:50). Salvation touches and restores every area of individual and community life.

Created in the very image of God, human beings are more than socioeconomic, material beings. They are far more complex than complex physical machines. They are also spiritual beings, invited to live forever in the presence of the living God. That is why Jesus said it is better to lose the whole world than to lose one's relationship with God (Mk 8:34-38). To misunderstand this leads to a one-sided preoccupation with material well-being, or an illusion that people can solve human problems merely by changing the socioeconomic environment, pursuing economic development initiatives, developing affordable housing, offering quality education, modifying economic

[26] Sider, *Good News and Good Works*, 61-70.

incentives, registering more voters, or lobbying politicians. Unless the whole problem is addressed, the whole problem cannot be solved.

Some evangelistic churches regard social concerns as a distraction from their spiritual mission. Some social ministries, on the other hand, focus on people's needs to the exclusion of their spiritual condition. Holistic ministries, however, respond to every dimension of human need. God loves not only people's spirits but people's whole selves. Ministering to a person's material needs is one way of communicating God's love. And leading someone to a right relationship with God has a profound effect on a person's psychological, physical, social, and economic well-being as well.

The local church is the means by which this holistic ministry takes place in transforming the world. It is the local extension of the Jesus Christ. The church is the called out body of believers that was organized to carry out the mission and ministry that Jesus established in his own life and witness. The local church as an organism of the Holy Spirit is a living body, the means through which Christ continues his saving work in the world. Jesus is the embodiment of the Word of God.

Holistic ministry is only accomplished with an understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This substitutionary atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ understands that He, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man and woman, and that all must be born again through faith in him or are forever lost. The cross and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ accomplish redemption, by grace through faith, believing in the heart that God raised him from the dead. Salvation is accomplished by declaring Jesus Christ as one's Lord and accepting him as one's personal Savior. Salvation is by him and none other, for "God has highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at

the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven and of those on earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).

Scripture is the basis for this holistic ministry, which focuses on Christ who transforms the prevailing practices and perceptions of society. A clear knowledge of the Scriptures helps to sustain real living through interpretation, application, and celebration in ministry. By knowing the Scriptures, one knows God through Jesus Christ who is its center and who is the ultimate objective. It is the God-human encounter on which the Bible reports that people are searching for and that lies beneath, behind, and all through the printed word. That encounter goes on. God is alive now, and God today is the same God who was in this encounter before the Bible was written. It was the encounter that causes the Bible to be produced.

Scripture addresses the question of Christianity and the need for holistic ministry. The Scripture contains the gospel, which for me gives a message of liberation, and social change that focuses on freedom from the structures of injustice, which are key elements of holistic ministry. The Scripture, in particular, the gospel writings, is a social message, solemn and overpowering in its force. It is the proclamation of the solidarity and brotherliness, in favor of those who have been oppressed. There is a real need to allow the message of the Scripture to speak to the current situation, which is the essence of holistic ministry. This message allows people to see and understand that God through Jesus Christ is indeed the liberator.

My theological interpretation of Christ as it relates to God and community is based primarily on the view of Jesus as God's supreme salvific revelation to humans

through fleshly and historical embodiment. The local church is the means by which that revelation is manifest in community and throughout history. This is why the local church is so important in the context of ministry. It is through the local church's mission and ministry that God's will is to be done on earth. To exist in community is to live in relationship to Christ. Living in relationship to Christ, however, is to be in relationship to the children of God regardless of their socio-economic status, skin color, education, or family background. Practicing the Christian faith, which is an expression of one's love and understanding of Jesus Christ, is the binding force that makes community possible. Commitment to the principles of Jesus and a willingness to practice his teachings will hasten the day that genuine community will become a reality.

Once church members begin to understand and embrace the mission of the church, it is natural for them to jump right into the "how" of community ministry. It is easy to get caught up in the technical, programmatic aspects of ministry: forming boards, generating resources, designing curriculum. Philippians 2:2 instructs, "Be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord." Church leaders need to help the congregation become of one mind regarding the theological foundations for holistic ministry.

Leaders can be intentional about conveying a holistic theology through implicit as well as explicit channels. One important way to do this is to tell stories. As with Jesus' parables, stories communicate theological truths that impact people's hearts as well as their minds.

CHAPTER 2

BOUNDARIES AND BARRIERS BETWEEN CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

"When we try to 'put feet' to what we have learned about loving others, we often collide with various obstacles," writes Amy Sherman in *Restorers of Hope*.[1] Church leaders who have gotten started in outreach mission often experience "hitting the wall." Church members have embraced a holistic theology and are geared up to love their communities in word and deed, but then once they actually start relating to needy neighbors, things begin to fall apart. Effective holistic ministry has been blocked by the boundaries between church and community.

Boundaries are not all negative. In some ways, the Church is to be distinct from the world around it. Believers are to "be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy" (Lev 19:2). In other ways, there is overlap. Believers are "in the world" even as they are "not of the world" (Jn 17: 11, 14). It is important to determine what it means to be "of the world" or "not of the world."

[1] Sherman, *Restorers of Hope*, 121.

Spiritual Boundaries

Spiritual boundaries are one area which defines those "not of the world." Paul thanks God for having "rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved son" (Col 1: 13). There is a substantive spiritual difference between those who abide in Christ's kingdom and those who do not acknowledge Christ as Lord. Of course, this does not mean that God loves the Church more than the world; in fact, it was for love of the world that God created the Church. But we do expect the Church to reflect a different set of priorities, values, and lifestyles than the surrounding society. This is one of the signs of the kingdom of God.

One question to consider, however, is whether those in the Church assume that anyone from the community who does not attend a particular church is automatically "of the world." Believers sometimes assume, for example, that if someone is poor, he or she must not be a Christian. Believers should search for God's presence in the neighborhood through other churches and faith-based ministries, rather than suspecting such ministries to be doctrinally inferior. It is important for believers to embrace anyone who follows Jesus Christ as those who are "not of the world."

The distance that members live from their churches (or communities of ministry) is also an important dynamic. It may or may not be the case that the people whom the local church wants to serve are congregation's "neighbors"—in the sense that church members see them over backyard fences, at PTA meetings, and in the grocery store. Or perhaps they are neighbors only in the sense of the parable of the Good Samaritan—strangers whom God has brought into one's path and called one to serve. Or perhaps they are a mixture of both.

Neighborhood churches, where most of the members live around the church, have a natural advantage when it comes to developing an outreach focus. They have an existing network of relationships, a cultural affinity, and built-in incentives for community development. Members know their neighbors from "real life" settings, not just Sunday mornings. Helping members of neighborhood churches become outreach-focused is sometimes just a matter of helping them realize their personal stake in what happens to the neighborhood. When people on the block come to Christ, when the schools improve, that benefits them as well.

On the other hand, it is human nature to love the neighbor on the other side of the city and dislike the person who lives next door. Members may need to be confronted about a prideful attitude that sets church people above "the people" (single moms, gang members, Muslims, and so on) in the community. On the flip side, sometimes church members in distressed communities have an inferiority complex that keeps them from reaching out. They may be struggling with needs themselves and do not want to expend the church's resources on outsiders. They need to be encouraged to see themselves and the church as whole, and as vital community assets. Leaders can help members dream of how collaboration, community organizing, and evangelism could expand the church's resources for both internal and external ministry.

Commuter churches face particular challenges in overcoming an internal focus. Members' lives are already spread out; they resist participating in one more thing they have to drive to. The ability to distance themselves, literally, from the pain and problems of a needy community dilutes the motivation of commuting members to address the needs. Members may also wrestle with prejudices and fears about going into certain

kinds of communities. Their status as "outsiders" of a given community may be a barrier to forming relationships of affinity and trust.

But commuter churches have their own advantages too. Commuting churches can draw on a broader network of human and financial resources to support their ministries. They can build bridges between communities, providing a hedge against the stagnation and sense of isolation that plagues many distressed neighborhoods. The exposure to a different culture or socioeconomic class can be mutually transforming and can form the foundation for authentic racial reconciliation.

Demographics and Cultural Boundaries

Boundaries of demographics and culture proclaim, "This is who fits in here (and who doesn't belong)." A church's identity can become a barrier to community acceptance. Single moms often feel uncomfortable in a church full of two-parent families. A gray-haired congregation may feel out of place in a neighborhood where half the residents are under eighteen. A church with a penchant for loud music and aggressive evangelistic programs will clash with a quiet, reserved community.

A congregation can make an intentional effort to define its cultural boundaries in a way that includes the community of ministry. For example, Life in Christ Church in Chester, Pennsylvania was once known as "the little drug church on Third Street" because it reached so many people struggling with addictions. New Creation Lutheran Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania honors its community's Latino heritage through celebrations such as Three Kings Day, a popular Latino festival. Circle of Hope in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania has shaped its worship, message, and activities to meet the

spiritual needs of Gen-Xers. Church consultant Jack Dennison writes that as a church identifies the various people groups in its community, "Each group must be treated as unique and approached with a level of integrity that says we understand you and will adapt our methods in an appropriate manner to who *you* are rather than expecting you to become what *we* are."[2]

Boundaries of Class and Race

Sadly, many churches also still struggle with barriers of class and race. This is especially tragic where demographic change has swept through a neighborhood, and people of different races who find themselves living next door still cannot bring themselves to worship together at the church on the corner. Ronald Sider mentions Peter Wagner in this discussion, who calls this ungodly syndrome "ethnicities," taken from the book, *A Heart for the City: Effective Ministries to Urban Community*, by John Fuder.[3] Even congregations that include people of more than one color can suffer from this syndrome. If the music, preaching style, and leadership all reflect one dominant ethnic group, the church sends a message to the community that minorities are welcome to attend only if they are willing to conform. A church must embrace diversity in every area of church life if it is to overcome ethnic barriers.

Middle-class churches—particularly those located in distressed neighborhoods—encounter significant barriers in reaching out to people who feel socially marginalized. Differences in the way people dress, talk, behave, or smell create mutual discomfort. A

---

[2] Jack Dennison, *City Reaching: On the Road to Community Transformation* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1999), 171.

[3] John Fuder, ed., *A Heart for the City: Effective Ministries to Urban Community* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2000), as discussed in Sider, *Churches that Make a Difference*, 153.

warm welcome, genuine friendliness, and social interaction outside the church service can help people who struggle to fit in.

Boundaries of "Church Culture"

Another type of boundary which can keep the community at arm's length is the "church culture." In a church service, there are often many "church lingoisms," references, or rituals that would make no sense to an unchurched person. Seen through their eyes, a church service can look pretty strange; people suddenly stand up, sit down, kneel, sing, or recite something in unison from memory. Rev. Bill Moore remarks from his long experience as pastor of Tenth Memorial Baptist Church in Philadelphia: "There was a time you could just assume that everybody knew who Jesus was, everybody knew how to find Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. . . . They knew what the church was about. That day is long gone."

On top of this, each church has its own "in-crowd" references and routines, such as which door to use to enter the church, what kind of clothes are appropriate, how loud to sing, how children are expected to behave, and where to go for coffee and doughnuts after the service. Whether all these distinctives create boundaries between a particular church and the community around it depends on how much exposure people in the community have had to church culture and how intentional the church is about becoming culturally adaptive and "user friendly." Members must value people above in-house church rules, rather than looking on naive newcomers as a nuisance. Ray Bakke and Sam Roberts, in their book, *The Expanded Mission of Urban Churches*, explain, "The *belief system* of the church may not have changed. The pastor may still be preaching 'you all

come to Jesus!' But the *behavior system* of the congregation can be communicating an intent to screen those who join."[4]

Physical Boundaries

Finally, boundaries can take physical form. Buildings that stand empty most of the week signal that the church has only a part-time commitment to the community. Aspects of the church's physical layout can send the community mixed messages about the extent of their welcome. One church, Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia, for example, installed large glass doors as a symbol of its openness to the neighborhood. However, the doors stay locked. People enter the church through conventional doors off to the side so that they won't smudge the glass. And there are even churches with "No Trespassing" signs on their buildings.

Fences, locked gates, or a lack of handicapped accessibility can also convey a double meaning. Sometimes these physical barriers are necessary to protect people and property, or they are the product of an earlier era that the congregation cannot afford to fix. Sometimes, however, as Kathryn Mowry points out in her book, "Do Good Fences Make Good Neighbors?" fences make a symbolic statement about "the rights of the members to worship without being joined by anyone who might make them feel uncomfortable" and "reflect a profound resistance to change that is often subconscious."[5] This does not mean that churches must keep every door unlocked and abandon all

---

[4] Ray Bakke and Sam Roberts, *The Expanded Mission of Urban Churches* (Chicago: International Urban Associates, 1998), 54.

[5] Kathryn Mowry, "Do Good Fences Make Good Neighbors? Toward a Theology of Welcome for the Urban Church," in *God So Loves the City,* ed. Charles Van Engen and Jude Tiersma (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1994), 108.

standards for decent, safe conduct. But churches should consider the signals that are sent out about what kinds of people are decent and safe.

Building Bridges between Churches and Community

Overcoming the barriers to holistic ministry requires an intentional effort both to welcome the community into the local church and to bring the local church out into the community. In *Churches That Make a Difference*, Sider makes seven suggestions for cultivating an outreach-minded congregation.[6] These suggestions are: 1) to welcome whoever walks through the door; 2) to network in the community; 3) to cultivate a sense of belonging in the community; 4) to connect the church's mission to the community; 5) to interweave the interests of the church and the community; 6) to take the church out into the community; and 7) to support the relocation of church members into the community.

Welcome Whoever Walks through the Door

The first suggestion is to welcome whoever walks through the door. A good place to start cultivating the congregation's commitment to reach out to the community is by loving the people in the community who come to the church. "We need a theology of welcome to tear down the fences that have come to separate 'church' and 'mission,'" writes Mowry. She adds, "Welcome becomes a transformational process, initiating and extending the community of the kingdom."[7]

---

[6] Sider, *Churches that Make a Difference*, 145-60.

[7] Mowry, "Do Good Fences Make Good Neighbors?" 117.

A friendly face can go a long way in a person's evangelistic journey. An elder at a church where I served gives this testimony of the power of a welcoming congregation: "One of the things that made me want to stay here is that when I first came to the door, before I was delivered from drugs, there was a guy there who greeted me with this great, huge smile. . . . I was down to 130 pounds, I really looked a mess. . . . He greeted me with a hug. That made me Think, 'Man, I like this place. I want to stay here.'"[8] A welcoming congregation looks past the barriers to see each person as a potential bride of Christ.

Being a truly welcoming congregation involves the whole church, not just the greeters at worship services. In people's daily lives, encounters with people in need are often viewed as annoying interruptions. Congregations should be encouraged, however, to welcome opportunities to minister informally to the needs that present themselves. One day at Second Baptist Church, where I served on staff from 2001 until 2008, a woman came to the office looking for a volunteer who had told her about a business that was hiring, to ask for more information. When the receptionist found out the woman didn't have a car, she put down the envelopes she was stuffing and drove her to the site.

Welcome should extend beyond the walls of the church to members' homes. A member of a nearby church literally welcomed a homeless woman with two children who knocked on her door. Over the weeks of the woman's stay, the member led her to the Lord. The guest began attending the church and was hired to help with the job of painting the church building, though she had never painted before. Now she is a self-

[8] This conversation took place on September 17, 1998 at Bethel Church of Christ Holiness in Los Angeles. The person's name is left anonymous.

supporting master painter. The pastor and his wife at The Neighborhood Community Church in Los Angeles welcomed two at-risk children from the community into their home and raised them as their own, and they have encouraged others at the church to do the same. Such acts of loving hospitality may be overlooked by news crews and grant givers, but they form the "warp and woof" of a church's transforming presence in a community.

Network in the Community

Networking is the exchange of information, ideas, and resources. The goal of networking is not to accomplish any particular task but to build relationships as we gather information, scout out potential allies, and let others know about our church. "A community network that knows the pastor's concerns and commitments," write Ray Bakke and Sam Roberts, "can have extraordinary significance for informing and defining the local church's priorities as it seeks to shape its mission in that community."[9] Another benefit of networking is that it builds the church's reputation in the community, explains Carl Dudley, author of *Basic Steps toward Community Ministry*. Dudley writes, "Others will see your church as a concerned neighborhood institution. The people you contact begin to think of the church as a potential partner in the area of shared concerns. They will treat the church differently and include the church in community meetings it has not been invited to before."[10]

---

[9] Bakke and Roberts, *The Expanded Mission of Urban Churches*, 53.

[10] Carl D. Dudley, *Basic Steps toward Community Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute, 1991), 33.

Church leaders should also get to know the executives and staff of key community institutions. They should offer to take people out to lunch, arrange to meet for coffee, or ask for a tour of their facilities—and leave a packet of information about their churches. Institutions to target for networking include other churches (and non-Christian houses of worship), social service agencies, schools, police departments, social security and welfare offices, businesses, health clinics, and foundations. Bakke and Roberts suggest a useful conversation starter when networking with pastors of other congregations: "What is the most important lesson you have learned about being a pastor in this community since you have begun?"[11] Every church leader should network in the community in the area of his or her ministry. For example, youth leaders should sit down with public school principals and teachers, directors of the local Boys and Girls Clubs, and people associated with the juvenile court system.

Cultivate a Sense of Belonging to the Community

"Your people shall be my people," said Ruth to Naomi (Ru 1:16). In the same way, a church's leaders should help their congregation to think about the residents of their community as "our people." Cultivating a sense of belonging is a transformational process that takes place through many small steps. A congregation should be encouraged to become familiar with its community by going on "field trips" to cultural events and restaurants. Church leaders should invite community leaders to their church's Christmas party and attend the dedication for a new elementary school. They should provide the congregation with a list of community restaurants and leave waiters and waitresses the

[11] Bakke and Roberts, *The Expanded Mission of Urban Churches*, 55.

church's business card along with the tip. Church leaders should host neighborhood meetings, AA meetings, and community theater productions. A church could sponsor its community's Little League team or display artwork in the sanctuary that reflects the community's ethnic heritage. A church could print church bulletins, clean the carpet, and purchase office supplies using local businesses. Church leaders could write letters to the editor about issues affecting the community.

Churches should be a presence in times of tragedy or outrage. A local church could find ways of identifying with the struggles of those in the community (Heb 13:3) and express sorrow over the things that cause grief to God and to the church's neighbors. It is important, however, not to focus exclusively on what is different or dysfunctional about the community. The congregation should be encouraged to identify with everything in the community that is delightful. A local church should give thanks for all its assets—from block captains to children's smiles—as gifts from God (1 Thes 5:18).

Such involvement contributes to the process of becoming friends with the community. The more a congregation knows and likes the community, the better it will be able to express love for the community in ministry. Moreover, these small steps also encourage the community to think of the church as its friend. In the beginning stages of holistic ministry, a local church should invest in later initiatives by building up the congregation's visibility and reputation in the community. Recognition is the first step toward trust. Developing a profile as a community-oriented church, for example, through wise use of media contacts to publicize church events or by consistently sending representatives to community meetings, increases the likelihood of winning support from

the community for new ministry projects. Becoming known as the church that gets involved in local issues will help open doors to resources and collaboration.

Connect the Church's Mission to the Community

Church members will consider outreach mission unimportant if it is invisible to them. Concern for community outreach may or may not enter into the life of a local church. Figure 1 contains five questions that should be asked by local churches as a means for self-examination.

Questions to Ask Regarding a Church's Mission to Its Community

- Do the songs sung in worship services mostly talk about our personal relationship with Jesus? Or do they also reinforce a message about God's love for the rest of the world and the church's calling to serve and reach out to others?
- What do the art and religious symbols in your church communicate? Is there anything that reflects the biblical themes of service, evangelism, restoration, and transformation?
- Do the needs of people outside the church and the issues faced by the community or other lands around the world regularly find their way into congregational prayers and bulletin announcements? Is there anything visible inside the church-newspaper articles or flyers about community events posted on the bulletin board, for example-that reminds congregants of the presence of the world outside the church?
- Do the papers in the church library or the literature in the foyer address issues of mission, or are they solely directed at the spiritual and personal development of Christians?
- Is the concept of "mission" used in such a way as to imply that it applies only to *foreign* missions? For example, if you have a missions bulletin board, are the pictures and letters all from overseas missionaries?

Figure 1. Questions to Ask Regarding a Church's Mission to Its Community

Local churches should consider ways to enfold a loving awareness of the community of ministry into "ordinary" aspects of church life. This communicates to the congregation that what happens inside the church walls is meant to be lived out in mission to the world outside. The church should be a refuge for members from the bruising realities of the world, but not a fortress where people go to shut out the world.

Interweave the Interests of Church and Community

A member of a church where I served told of the time God convicted him of not taking seriously Christ's command to love his neighbor as himself. He recognized that he occasionally did nice things for people in need, but he was convicted about truly loving others "as himself." He set up a jar in his home marked, "For the Neighbor." Whenever he bought something nonessential for himself, like a soda, he put an equivalent amount of money in the jar. His family got used to saying, "Here's one for me, and one for the neighbor!" When a crisis arose in a neighbor's life, he went right to the jar, dumped out the money, and was able to help meet the need.[12]

In a similar spirit, a church might link its internal care to outreach. When the church raises funds for new carpeting, it could raise an extra "tithe" of the amount to donate to a local housing organization. When the youth group plans a camping trip, it could invite (and pay for) youth from a homeless shelter to go along. The church could hold a congregational meeting in the church's fellowship hall or family life center and afterward repaint it. The church could offer a series of evening seminars on parenting, posting notices in the local YMCA where parents could see them when they drop off

[12] This is a conversation that occurred with an anonymous person on March 12, 1998 in Los Angeles.

their kids for activities. These kinds of actions signal that a congregation is serious about loving community neighbors. They also help develop the habit of talking about inward ministries and outreach ministries in the same breath—as all part of the church's essential work.

Take the Church out into the Community

A congregation cannot hope to build loving relationships with the community, particularly those who are most needy and vulnerable, by "sitting in the four walls of the church. You've actually got to get out in the community."[13] Instead of always waiting for the community to come to the church, the church can "take its show on the road," moving out into the community. This does not entail starting a new ministry program—just relocating some of the existing ones. One of the simplest things to do is to hold a regular weekend worship service outdoors in the summertime.

A success story of ministry relocation comes from Bethel Church of Christ in Los Angeles, where I once served. Rather than holding the traditional Vacation Bible School at the church, Bethel one year decided to tell families, "We will meet you right where you are." In the summer of 1997, 120 VBS groups met in homes, public facilities, and community nonprofit agencies. While the decentralized format required a higher level of congregational participation, it also allowed the church to reach far more children than if it had held a single VBS at the church's facility. That summer, over five hundred children made decisions for Christ. Another impact of moving the program out of the church and into members' homes, explains a church leader, is that now "families in that

[13] Sider, *Churches that Make a Difference*, 148.

community see those homes as places of refuge." People in the community, who would not dream of calling the pastor to ask for prayer, feel freer to ask at the home where their children went to VBS.

Members also take the church into the community when they adopt the incarnational understanding that wherever they go, they *are* the church. The church is that medium that transforms the community through its involvement in the community. Routine interactions and chance meetings provide opportunities for members to represent the church to those outside the congregation.

Support the Relocation of Church Members into the Community

If one's church is not located in the community of ministry, members should be encouraged to consider a calling to relocate there. This may be a good opportunity for the church to consider investing in the community by purchasing existing housing in the community or developing new housing in the community so that both its members and those in the community will have access to affordable housing. The ministry of relocation is essential to breaking down barriers and developing a healthy sense of belonging to the community.

The pastor at Central Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Rev. Marcus Pomeroy, once preached a series on the theme of "windows." One sermon made the point that what people see out their windows every day shapes them in subtle but profound ways, whether they are used to seeing paved roads and streetlights, "for sale" and "help wanted" signs, cement or trees, horizons or high-rises. This is why John Perkins, founder of the Christian Community Development Association, calls passionately for relocation

because you can fully identify with the people you serve only if you greet the same scene out the window each morning. Perkins states, "Relocation transforms 'you, them, and theirs' to 'we, us, and ours.'" [14]

The book of Nehemiah provides a wonderful model for relocation. The Israelites had completed the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, but the city was still in ruins and the local economy was in shambles. Few residents remained in the city to complete the work of restoration (7:4). Those who had fled the city were naturally reluctant to return to such an unstable, unsafe environment. So the people of the outlying area came up with an innovative solution: They "cast lots to bring one out of ten to dwell in the holy city Jerusalem" (11: 1). In other words, they tithed their population to relocate to the city. The Nehemiah model encourages congregations to anoint those who dedicate themselves to living in the neighborhood as the church's ministry representatives (11:2). Those who have relocated become community liaisons who help others in the congregation understand and connect with the community.

Besides nurturing an affinity between the church and the community, relocation also lays an important foundation for effective community ministry. On the other hand, without a strong community presence, a church's success in transformational ministry can actually undermine the overall quality of life in a distressed community. As maturing Christians get their lives together, as they get better jobs and higher incomes, and as they develop healthy family lives, they often move out of the community. By empowering persons, the church might be helping to drain the community of its best assets: stable

[14] John M. Perkins, "What Is Christian Community Development?" in *Restoring At-risk Communities: Doing It Together and Doing It Right*, ed. John Perkins (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 22.

Christian families. Encouraging church members to relocate helps to counter that trend. It sends a strong message to residents of the church'\'s long-term commitment and serves as a symbol of hope. If the church is consistently cultivating a sense of belonging to the community, incorporating an emphasis on reaching out to the community, stressing its hopeful vision for the community, and modeling its dedication to the community through relocation, it is better able to attract and keep Christian families in the community who share the church's mission.

Summary

These seven measures can help strengthen a congregation's commitment to outreach and ties to the community of ministry. Ultimately, however, the congregation must choose whether it wants "more and more for me and mine" or more and more of God's boundless, self-sacrificial love for the world on its doorstep. Without love, outreach ultimately amounts to busywork (1 Cor 13:3). Bridge-building activities and relationships can easily become just means to an end, a kind of community public relations, if love is not at the heart of the matter. The more a congregation loves God, the more God can love a community through the congregation. The more a congregation yields to God's will and relies on the Spirit's power, the more it will identify with God's mission in the community. The more a congregation enters into the life of the community, the more the life-giving Spirit can flow through them to their neighbors, thereby becoming the emerging church and pursuing the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ.

PART TWO

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL CHARACTER OF LEADERSHIP

CHAPTER 3

ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM JESUS

Jesus as the Ultimate Entrepreneur

Jesus grew up in the family business, learning his trade from his dad. Hour by hour they worked to fulfill orders, the son at first watching, then helping, then managing his own projects. His father smiled with pride when the son finished his first piece by himself. It was most likely a chair or possibly a small table. It was crafted well, especially so for a boy who was not yet ten years old.

By the time he was twelve, however, the boy knew that carpentry was not his calling. He could feel the stirring in his soul. He began watching and learning as he prepared for the mission that he was on this planet to complete. He remained in the carpentry trade until he was thirty, tuning the business after his dad died, more than likely training his younger brothers just as he had been trained. He eye for design showed he was an artist as well as a craftsman. The pieces he produced were built to last and were in high demand. As the village carpenter, he was counted on to build and repair furniture and tools every day. He also used his ability to make gifts and decorations that helped the oppressed people of his land find a glimmer of hope, as they lived in an occupied territory, ruled by foreign power.

But as good as he was in creating wonderful and functional things out of wood, carpentry was not his ultimate destiny. So at the age of thirty, he retired from the carpentry business and set out on a new venture. He was troubled by the deep needs of the people around him and knew that the existing methods fell far short of meeting those needs. He listened to the teachers of religious law and tradition and knew that their techniques failed to bring about heart changes in those who heard the teachings. He yearned to help the lost, to gather them to himself as a good shepherd would gather wandering sheep.

He left everything that was familiar, the safe and secure family business. He set out alone at first, with no means of livelihood and nowhere to live. Soon he gathered around him passionate but untrained coworkers, and in three years this entrepreneur and his ragtag band of followers started a movement that changed the world.

Jesus of Nazareth was, and is, the ultimate entrepreneur. That may sound like a false characterization, especially if one thinks of entrepreneurs only as people who are gifted at making money. Jesus, of course, was not about turning a tidy profit.

Jesus did not come to secure patents, build corporations, or take his company public so he could make a killing on the Initial Public Offering (IPO). Frankly, he did need the money. He had already owned everything before he left heaven and took on human form. He chose to set everything aside and enter the noise and dirt and turmoil of life on earth to fulfill his heart's desire—to save men and women from death brought about by slavery to sin. Jesus was the ultimate entrepreneur because he looked at the way things were and refused to allow them to remain that way. He set the standard for entrepreneurship.

Status and social standing mean everything to some people. Seating arrangements are a perfect indication of this, revealing the people who think more of themselves than others think of them. If there is a formal dinner, they are convinced they merit seats at the head table. They deserve them, they believe, since they are more powerful and more important than others in the room.

Such thinking is perfectly acceptable to those who subscribe to a human system of measuring worth and assigning value. Jesus, the entrepreneur, taught differently, establishing an upside-down standard. He said, in effect, "Start at the back of the room and wait for someone to call you forward." He taught his followers that, instead of cutting to the front of the line, the best place to begin is at the back of the line. Then, he said, when things are turned upside down, those at the back will end up in the front (Lk 14:7-11).

As every entrepreneur knows, adhering to the status quo will bring the same results that have been achieved in the past. If one is out to change things, to improve lives, he or she must adopt the methods of Jesus. A spiritual entrepreneur is never afraid to turn things upside down, to challenge the accepted authorities, to find the truth behind what sells itself as the truth, and to take initiatives based on what he or she discovers.

It does people no good to receive more of anything if they are not ready to handle more. Most people have enough trouble handling what they already have. So Jesus goes to work to help people accept and properly use the increase he wants to give them. He strengthens one's fishing net so that when that person, in obedience to his command, throws it into the water on the other side of the boat, he or she can haul in the overwhelming catch that he brings.

So many people have a reverse understanding of what it means to allow Jesus to direct their lives. Following Jesus does not mean losing all the things he "makes us give up." It is just the opposite. Following the Lord is all about what he gives. It is about the abundance people receive as they live in obedience to his vision, his guidance, and his plans for them. He is the only one who can deliver a future, real hope, health, and life.

Jesus, the entrepreneur, also added value. Entrepreneurs look at current products and services and evaluate them to see how value can be added. Likewise, Jesus looked at life around him and saw how he could add value. He brought eternal value to ordinary human life. To the woman who met him at the well, a woman who endured social ostracism and who lived in immorality, Jesus added living water (Jn 4:1-26). To those who were blind, Jesus added sight (Jn 9:1-25). To Zaccheus, the corrupt tax collector, Jesus added real wealth (Lk 19:1-10). To Lazarus, Jesus' close friend who had died, Jesus added life to his days (Jn 11:38-44). By learning from the consummate Entrepreneur, one finds that the practice of entrepreneurial faith today can produce results similar to those of Jesus. In fact, he told his followers that they would do even greater things than what he had done on earth (Jn 14:12-14).

Theological entrepreneurship challenges existing mindsets, introduces initiatives that are focused on the business of faith, upends the status quo, increases capacity, and adds value. Jesus showed how these things are done so that believers can step out in faith and follow him. Entrepreneurs follow Jesus' blueprint and take bold risks to advance the business of faith. Working through the Holy Spirit, God continues to launch bold initiatives on earth. In establishing God's Kingdom, God reaches out again and again with his love. Whenever God draws people to himself, God is acting in response to their

needs. By enjoying the benefits and blessings of God's work in one's life, that individual gets a real taste of needs being met by an entrepreneurial God. This is the model people are called to imitate in their own lives of faith. Believers have been promised the mind of Christ, and that is a promise all believers need to claim (1 Cor 2:16). Entrepreneurial faith is not ultimately about technique and strategy; it is about following God.

There are five distinct ways that Jesus created the original blueprint for the business of faith in engaging theological entrepreneurship. When Jesus began his earthly ministry, the prevailing teaching about God was that he was a hard taskmaster, and in order to please him one had to strictly follow every part of the Mosaic Law and even the established religious customs and traditions. Then Jesus arrived and turned things around. "You have heard what the Law of Moses says," he cried. "But I say . . ." and he gave them a new command. Jesus challenged not only the teachings of the religious leaders of his day but the leaders themselves. Jesus knew that trying to follow the law and human tradition led to nothing but endless frustration. So he proposed something completely new.

Jesus came with a new contract without tearing up the old contact. Instead, he fulfilled the law by living on earth and fulfilling to the smallest details all of God's law. Then he offered a new deal; he forgave debts, freeing people to live life to its fullest potential. Not only was this a new deal, but it was the perfect deal. He even gave the Holy Spirit to help believers live in this faith relationship. Entrepreneurs look at things the way they are and say, "It does not have to stay like this. There has to be a better way." To obtain new results, it is necessary to challenge existing mindsets, just like Jesus did.

Jesus' followers continually asked him the same question, even after his resurrection: "Is this the time when we get to shake off the shackles of Roman rule and run Israel ourselves?" (Acts 1:6, paraphrased). What they did not understand was that Jesus had already freed them from the human rule and introduced them to a new kingdom—the Kingdom of God. When one lives and operates in God's Kingdom, one is subject to his rule, no matter who the human rulers might be. Jesus taught that the Kingdom of God was not some distant dream world but a Kingdom that people can live in right now. It is where God's will is done. It is where people can feel safe and secure, even when oppressors are shouting and shaking their spears.

Entrepreneurs introduce new rules and new conditions for living. They do not accept what everyone else sees as reality. They look for a new reality behind what is seen by others. They go deeper to discover the truth that sheds light on what is masquerading as the truth. They probe and investigate and consider alternatives. They develop new initiatives to bring the truth and power of God's Kingdom to bear on the temporal world.

Jesus' Model of Servant Leadership

In developing a paradigm for the entrepreneurial character of leadership, there is no better example than Jesus. In developing this understanding of the entrepreneurial character of leadership, the first characteristic is servant leadership. For Jesus, the mission was to be the Messiah. He was sent to bring salvation to the world as God's sent one. He served that mission by living as the Suffering Servant Messiah. This mission was everything for Jesus. It was his purpose and direction for all that he did on earth,

including his death. For Jesus, the model of leadership was servanthood. He was never self-serving. He led first as a servant to his Father in heaven, who gave him his mission.

Mission is everything for the servant leader. The mission that God or someone in authority entrusts to the leader is the focus of every decision and action. True servant leadership begins when the leaders humbles themselves to carry out the mission entrusted to them rather than their personal agendas.

This service to the mission creates the passion that is essential for a leader's effectiveness. Lyle Schaller told a group of church leaders, "I think passion is the critical variable. It has taken me a long time to come around to that, but if a pastor does not have a passion for the mission, you can forget the rest. I would insist the number one quality of a leader be passion."[1] Bill Easum concurs with Schaller when he states, "It all goes back to why we are doing this. . . . It's the mission . . . and the pastor and key leaders simply must have a passion for the mission. It's more than just maintaining or even growing a church, but believing your church can reach an entire city of a region; believing they can make a difference."[2] Servant leaders have passion for the mission because the mission is so paramount in their lives that they have literally become servants to it. The passion for the mission drives the leader to recruit and empower others to join him on that mission.

---

[1] Lyle Schaller, as quoted by Caro Childress in *NetFax*, a publication of Leadership Network, No. 84 (10 November 1997). Schaller's quote was part of a discussion held at a Think Tank led by Bill Easum, founder and president of 21st Century Strategies held on November 3, 1997.

[2] Bill Easum, as quoted by Caro Childress in *NetFax*, a publication of Leadership Network, No. 84 (10 November 1997). Easum's quote was part of a discussion held at a Think Tank led by Bill Easum, founder and president of 21st Century Strategies held on November 3, 1997.

A servant leader is also servant to those on mission with him. While serving the mission, servant leaders actively recruit and build up others to join them. The leader becomes servant to those who have joined him when he provides adequate vision, direction, correction, and resources to carry out the mission entrusted to the group. The leader serves when he equips others and "teams" with them to reach the goal of mission together.

Leadership begins when a God-revealed mission captures a person. This person becomes a leader as he or she becomes servant to the mission. Before mission, there is no need or motivation to lead. The leader then sees a picture of what the mission looks like in the future and casts his or her vision of that mission to others. Vision is a leader's unique rendering of the mission. Leadership turns to service when the leader equips those recruited to carry out the now-shared mission. Leadership is complete when the equipper empowers those who have been equipped and organizes them into teams to maximize resources in order to execute the mission. Simply put, servant leadership is passionate service to the mission and to those who join the leader on that mission.

The four operative concepts of servant leadership are: Mission, Vision, Equipping, and Team. Mission is God's call on one's life. Vision is one's unique take on that mission. Equipping is how one trains others to join on the mission to complete the vision. When a person becomes a servant to the mission and vision, he or she also becomes a leader. This corresponds with Jesus' mission as Messiah and vision of the kingdom of God. When a servant to the mission recruits a group of people to carry out that mission with him or her, that person becomes a leader who serves. The leader serves by equipping those on mission and mobilizing them into teams to reach the vision cast for

them. These elements correspond to Jesus' serving his disciples by calling them to follow him and building the twelve into a ministry team.

Servant leaders follow Jesus rather than seek position. Jesus wants servant leaders to be followers first. Contemporary observers of leadership also acknowledge the need for a leader to be a follower. Douglas K. Smith writes, "In the twenty-first century organization, all leaders must learn to follow if they are to successfully lead. . . . Leaders at all levels and in all situations must pay close attention to situations in which their most effective option is to follow—not because the hierarchy demands they 'obey,' but because performance requires them to rely on the capacities and insights of other people."[3]

Max DePree of the DePree Leadership Institute claims that becoming a good follower is important training to becoming a good leader. "If one is already a leader," he writes, "the lessons of following are especially appropriate. Leaders understand the essential contributions as well as the limitations of good followers."[4] Leaders must know the skills of following if they are to contribute most to those seeking to reach the goal with them.

Following is at the core of being a servant leader. The word "disciple" means "learner."[5] In Jesus' day, disciples literally followed their teachers around as they learned from them. To learn from Jesus means to follow Jesus. The Church today seems

---

[3] Douglas K. Smith, "The Following Part of Leading" in *The Leader of the Future*, ed by Frances Hesselbein, Marshall Goldman, and Richard Beckhard (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), 199-200.

[4] Max DePree, *Leadership Jazz* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 198.

[5] Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online, s.v. "disciple," http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/disciple (accessed March 1, 2011).

to be more interested in those who are ambitious to lead than in those who are willing to follow. Jesus called his disciples to follow him. They became leaders only after Jesus empowered them to lead; he empowered them by insisting they follow him first.

Leadership begins with mission. Without mission there is no need or motivation to lead. A God-sized mission that captures the heart of a person draws him or her into leadership because the leader must have others involved in order to carry out a mission of that size. God never calls his people to do something that they can do on their own. Otherwise, they would not need God. Servant leadership never begins with the individual's wishes to better the world or attain a personal goal. Servant leadership finds its motive from God's commissioning of a person to carry out a divine plan among a group of people. Becoming a servant to the mission and a follower of God is the heart of servant leadership.

The Bible illustrates the importance of servanthood in leadership through many examples. Joseph became a leader after God placed a vision in his heart to preserve his covenant people. Moses became a servant leader of God when he followed God's call on his life to go to Pharaoh and deliver the message: "The Lord says, Let my people go" (Ex 8:1, KJV). Gideon would never have been a leader if he had not followed God's mission to deliver the tribes of Israel from the Midianites. David became a king when God, through Samuel, anointed him king. He humbly followed God's plan to assume the throne of Israel. He did not seek it. Isaiah became a prophet leader when God called him to take a message of hope and judgment to the people of Israel. Nehemiah became a remarkable leader when God commissioned him to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem. Esther became a leader when God, through Mordecai, called her to stand before the king

to protect the remnant of God's people. Peter became a leader in the early Church after Jesus commissioned him and other disciples to make disciples of all peoples. The apostle Paul led from a clear mission to extend the boundaries of God's grace to those outside the Jewish faith.

The Bible depicts the fact that leadership among God's people began with God's call and a person's willingness to follow. Leaders among God's people come into leadership as they carry out God's mission. They do not seek positions of leadership so they can do great things.

Rick Warren, the pastor of Saddleback Community Church in Orange County, California, is a contemporary example of a servant leader who is first a follower of God's mission in his life. Warren began his ministry because God called him to build a church around the mission of God as spelled out in "a great commitment to the great commandment and the great commission."[6]. Warren has followed God's call and has become servant to the mission God gave him. He now leads thousands of people at Saddleback Community Church as well as many other church leaders because of his willingness and humble service toward carrying out what God has commissioned. Warren's incredibly popular and insightful book, *The Purpose Driven Church*, describes the power of purpose or mission in a church and a church leader's life. He makes this essential point: "Nothing precedes purpose. The starting point for every church should be the question, 'Why do we exist?' Until you know what your church exists for, you have

[6] Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 79.

no foundation, no motivation, and no direction for ministry."[7] Throughout his book, Warren explains the role of the leader as he guides people to discover, articulate, and build processes to live out divine purposes through the local church.

God is using men and women with Warren's heart and vision to call the Church back to its core purpose to revive and reform the Church for a new work in this culture. God is looking for servant leaders who are first followers of God's mission in their own lives to lead these purposeful churches. Only purpose-driven pastors can lead purpose-driven churches.

Another principle that Jesus used towards gaining an understanding of the entrepreneurial character of leadership is that servant leaders give up personal rights to find greatness in service to others. This principle is inherent in Jesus' definition of greatness. In exhibiting this, Jesus exhibited paradoxical styles of leadership. He adapted his style according to those he addressed and the context of the situation. He was as gentle as a lamb yet courageous as a lion. He was yielding yet aggressive when cornered by injustice. He was gregarious but spent much time alone. He was meek yet in control at all times. He never had a formal education, yet he taught with great authority. He was a conformist yet an iconoclast. He was a friend to the outcast yet dined with insiders.

Jesus' character never changed. He remained committed to the Father's call on his life. Out of that call and character, however, he adapted a style of leadership to meet the moment. Jesus' leadership style often presented a paradox to those who tried to follow and to those who observed him.

---

[7] Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, 81.

Jesus also used paradox in his teaching. Jesus taught, "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Mt 10:39). "So the last will be first, and the first will be last" (Mt 20:16). "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed" (Mt 13:31). "Whoever humbles himself will be exalted" (Mt 23:12). Jesus effectively wove contrasting images to introduce his message to the various people who sought him.

Paradox gives a leader the power to relay the complexities of a vision. Seemingly opposite images create tension that is necessary if one is to find the truth. Great leaders use paradox to state the values of the new reality. Jesus defined greatness and leadership with paradox. The images confused the disciples, as they baffle people today as well. Jesus painted greatness as the work of a servant. He defined leadership as the place of a slave. Both pictures seemed distorted to those who saw them through the lens of their culture.

Jesus also used metaphors and analogies to illustrate servant leadership. For example, Jesus knew that true agents of change create new containers to hold the future. He taught that the results brought by change cannot be contained in old methods. Anyone who has tried to make change in a church or business knows the explosion that can occur when a new plan is poured into old ways of doing things. Jesus knew that change demanded new forms as well as new content. He painted an analogy from everyday life to help his followers understand the dangers of clinging to old methods when new realities come into their lives.

I serve as executive pastor of a non-denominational church that was launched on April 12, 2009 (Easter Sunday). In this capacity, one of my responsibilities is to build the

capacity of the leaders of the church. When I began to lead this church to a new model of doing church, I told a story using an analogy of an entrepreneur who wanted to build a new product. The story, called "The Product: From Warehouse to Factory: Moving the Church to Do What It Was Commissioned to Do," is paraphrased from the Spring 1993 issue of *Growing Churches*:

> A wealthy entrepreneur, who made his money taking risks, wanted to produce a product. He did market research, studied manufacturing trends, and discovered that fiber optics was the industry of the future. Since no one would want to buy cables and switching stations, he conceived a video/voice mailbox in which one could send and receive both information and digital images. If it could be manufactured cheaply enough, every home in America would have a 2V box by 2012.
>
> The entrepreneur brought his American investors together. They agreed to the project and raised more than sixty million dollars in less than a month. The entrepreneur hired a project manager to begin producing the product. "I want to build a video/voice mailbox. Can you do it?" asked the entrepreneur.
>
> "Sure," said the project manager.
>
> And he began to build the most modern, efficient, state-of-the-art warehouse.
>
> Having provided the resources and the authority of the project, the entrepreneur left to begin another venture.
>
> The project manager hired staff to begin plans for a warehouse to gather all the pieces needed for the product. He traveled around the country going to seminars and other state-of-the-art warehouses so he could put together the best warehouse. He hired engineers, suppliers, and managers for the warehouse. Each month he hired more employees to code, shelf, and inventory the contents of the warehouse. He even traveled to Japan to study warehouse management, and returned with years of plans for acquiring, systematizing, and storing materials.
>
> Halfway through the third year, when the warehouse had grown to over 100,000 square feet, 200 employees, and had an inventory of 20 million dollars, the project manager threw a company picnic. All employees, from the dockhands to the shift managers, were there with their families. They celebrated their warehouse.
>
> Suddenly, out of the blue, a helicopter appeared over the picnic. It was the entrepreneur. His helicopter landed in the middle of the picnic, and stepped out with a smile.
>
> "Gentlemen," he proclaimed from a picnic stage, "I see you are celebrating. I heard about this event and came as soon as I could. I wanted to see the first video/voice mailbox you have produced. Where is it?"

> The employees looked at one another, "Who is this guy? What video/voice mailbox?"
>
> A shift manager stepped up to the entrepreneur, "Sir, you must be mistaken. This is a picnic to celebrate the most modern, efficient, state-of-the-art warehouse."
>
> "A warehouse? I gave your project manager the authority and resources to produce a product – not build a warehouse! Where is that man?" the entrepreneur said in a big voice.
>
> The project manager left his place at the head table and made his way to the entrepreneur. "Here I am," he said in a small voice.
>
> "What are you doing building a warehouse? Warehouses don't produce products; they store them."
>
> "Well, sir, I thought we could gather the goods and organize them before we build the factory and produced the product," the well-meaning project manager said.
>
> "You thought wrong. You are fired and I will sue you for breach of contract. I want a product, not a warehouse," said the entrepreneur.
>
> After firing the project manager and laying off all of the employees, the entrepreneur went to a group of Korean investors. "I want to build a video/voice mailbox. Can you do it?" asked the entrepreneur.
>
> "Sure," they said.
>
> And they began to build the most modern, efficient, state-of-the-art factory.[8]

Jesus commissioned his people to make disciples, not warehouse Christians. Matthew 28:19 makes this very clear: "As you go, make disciples." Too many churches are warehouses of well-planned, well-managed programs for storing and shipping out believers. Jesus, on the other hand, commissioned his Church to produce a product, not build warehouses.

In his classic book, *Servant Leadership*, Robert Greenleaf stated that servant leadership "begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead."[9] Though we may not be able to establish a

---

[8] C. Gene Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998), 99-102. According to Wilkes, the full story, titled "From Warehouses to Factories," was published in *Growing Churches* (Spring 1993).

[9] Robert Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2002), 434.

clear sequence as described by Greenleaf, a study of Jesus' life reveals that serving others was central to his exercise of leadership. This was not a popular idea in Jesus' day. Aristotle taught that the division between slaves and rulers was a not just a matter of political expediency but a reflection of fundamental differences between people, affirming that, writes Greenleaf, "from the hour of their birth, some are marked for subjection, others for rule."[10] According to this framework, to perform acts of service was to mark oneself as belonging to the slave class.

Jesus taught that his disciples were to be different. John writes, "[He] got up from supper, and laid aside his garments; and taking a towel, he girded himself. Then he poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded" (Jn 13:4-5, NASB). This demonstration of the lowliest form of service was both a warning against authority's power to distance the leader from followers and also a graphic portrayal of the kind of leadership Jesus practiced and expected from his team.

Michael Marquardt and Nancy Berger, in their book, *Global Leaders for the 21st Century*, mention four outcomes of a servant style of leadership: 1) increased service to others; 2) a holistic approach to work; 3) a sense of community; and 4) shared decision-making power.[11] All of these outcomes can be seen in Jesus' ministry. He looked at people's heart and gave them what they truly needed. He healed the sick and fed the hungry. He washed his disciple's feet. Of course, his crowning act of service was to intentionally sacrifice his life to redeem others. In his words, "the Son of Man did not

[10] Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 455.

[11] Michael Marquardt and Nancy Berger, *Global Leaders for the 21st Century* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2000), 22.

come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mt 20:28, NASB). The connection between service and leadership was new to a world accustomed to tyrants and political opportunists, but this was only one of many innovations that characterized Jesus' ministry

Jesus as a Risk-taker

Next to his death on the cross, washing the feet of his disciples was Jesus' ultimate model of servant leadership. On his last night with the leadership team, Jesus chose to serve those who should have served him. Many people do not immediately see what kind of risk that was. Jesus was giving up his place at the head of the table. This is just the kind of risk he will require of his followers. But before believers try to apply this lesson, they need to understand how Jesus could do what he did.

Every great leader takes risks, taking others to places no one has gone before. Since leaders set the pace for their groups, they are free to go out of the ordinary and to ask startling questions. But when leaders guide people to new places, they often risk their position, power, and provisions. After all, others in an organization may not be feeling so adventurous. Or perhaps a follower worries about money a lot. The organization may not "get it" when the leader is taking Christ's followers into unchartered territory. Or perhaps the people with the purse strings have a different definition of success than the leader has. One can begin to imagine all kinds of situations in which good leadership equals risk taking, which could well equal losses. James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, in their book, *The Leadership Challenge*, describe leaders in this way: "Leaders are pioneers—people who are willing to step out into the unknown.

They are people who are willing to take risks, to innovate and experiment in order to find new and better ways of doing things."[12]

Leaders take risks because they see the future before anyone else can. This ability places leaders on the horizon rather than in the comfort zone of a settler's home. Joel Arthur Barker, in his book, *Future Edge*, compares pioneering leaders to settlers: "What's the difference between a pioneer and a settler? It is the settler who always is calling toward the horizon, "Is it safe out there now?" The voice calling back, "Of course it's safe out here!" is the pioneer's. That is because the pioneers take the risk, go out early, and make the new territory safe."[13] Winston Churchill was known as a man who took huge risks. Steven Hayward, in his book, *Churchill on Leadership*, observes, "Churchill's refusal throughout his career to practice black, risk-adverse politics stands out as his most striking leadership attribute. Churchill's audacious and risk-taking character was at the core of his genius."[14] Hayward noted that his risk-taking "also constituted the chief liability of his long career and nearly led to his ruin."[15] But Churchill overcame that liability by learning from his mistakes. Great leaders take risks.

DePree contends that "by avoiding risk we really risk what's most important in life—reaching toward our growth, our potential, and a true contribution to a common goal."[16] DePree says it takes a special kind of risk to join an organization purely to serve.

---

[12] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (New York: Warner Books, 1994), 8.

[13] Joel Arthur Barker, *Future Edge* (New York: William Morrow, 1992), 71.

[14] Steven F. Hayward, *Churchill on Leadership* (Rocklin, CA: Prima, 1997), 28-9.

[15] Ibid., 30.

[16] Max DePree, *Leading without Power* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), 138.

"Wherever or however we serve," he concludes, "we can't avoid the central conundrum of risk: to risk nothing is perhaps the greatest risk of all."

Further, it is important to know one's origins as a child of God when taking risks. Jesus came from God. John 1:1-18 describes this truth. Scripture makes is clear that all life is sacred because its source is God. Jeremiah declared his trust that God called him to mission before he formed him in his mother's womb (Jer 1:5). God commanded that no one take the life of another because life is good (Ex 20:13). People can risk service to others when they trust, like Jesus, that they have come from God.

Jesus was not afraid of risk or innovation for that matter. John reports an occasion when the crowds began to abandon Jesus because they found his teaching too innovative for their taste (Jn 6). After the crowd left, he turned to the twelve disciples and said: "You do not want to go away also, do you?" (Jn 6:67). There is a lot of riskiness in that question. Jesus was offering them an exit because he knew that, in order to have commitment from his followers, he had to risk giving them the freedom to leave. Jesus described his enterprise as "new wine" that required "new wineskins" (Mt 9:17). He broke centuries of racist and gender segregation by walking into the heart of Samaria and speaking to a Samaritan woman (Jn 4:1-26). He allowed a prostitute to wash his feet (Lk 7:37-38). Perhaps his riskiest move was to turn his mission over to the feeble hands of his disciples. This was certainly on his mind when he prayed: "I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are" (Jn 17:11). Leaving everything in the hands of his followers was risky and it would require unity for Jesus' global vision—the business of faith—to become a reality.

When believers act on their visions, change will take place. Risk-taking is a big part of the package. Thus, leaders can move forward with courageous faith and entrepreneurial faith. Creativity and dreaming can become the norm and not the rare exception. God calls his people to follow him in the risky, exciting journey of entrepreneurial ministry and to become that same type of leader. Believers cannot live as true imitators of Jesus without practicing this kind of entrepreneurial theology.

Jesus as Public Theologian

Robert Franklin, President of Morehouse College, in his book, *Another Day's Journey*, envisions a diamond with seven facets, each representing a critical feature of leadership. Franklin believes that all leaders should become public theologians. Public theologians, according to Franklin, are committed to presenting their understanding of God along with their ethical principles and values to the public for scrutiny, discussion, and possible acceptance.[17] In contrast to sectarian theologians who understand that they are speaking for and to the community of believers, public theologians understand themselves as ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor 5:20). They stand between two worlds, representing the distinctive vision and virtues of Christianity to a secular culture. They stand in a particular faith tradition but seek to address people from all walks of life. And they do so with a deep respect for the belief systems that others may already hold. Consequently, public theologians move into the public arena with a profound sense of humility, reverence for the sacredness of people and traditions, and, in view of their manifold limitations, a sense of humor about a noble calling.

[17] Franklin, *Another Day's Journey*, 43.

According to Franklin, the public theologian should first serve as an anointed spiritual guide. Spiritual guides understand their roles in helping to lead people to a deeper experience of God. Second, public theologians should be grassroots intellectuals who initiate and encourage informed public discussion. Third, public theologians should be civic enablers who understand how to empower neighborhoods both through the political system and volunteerism. Fourth, public theologians should be the stewards of community economic development. They should recognize the potential economic power of billions of dollars in aggregate income that African-Americans receive, and they should organize ways to harness it for community development. Fifth, leaders should be Afro-centric cultural celebrants who proudly affirm their African past and use it to enrich their personal and collective lives today. Sixth, public theologians should be family facilitators.[18] Recognizing the declining rates of marriage and family formation in the Black community, they should promote a culture of marriage and family. Ultimately, they should seek to facilitate the growth of extended family networks. Finally, public theologians, according to Franklin, should be technologically literate visionaries, aware of the emerging technologies and trying to harness their potential to improve lives.[19]

Jesus' personal ministry was a holistic ministry that touched the lives of people where they were and empowered them to change their situations with the help of the Church as a spiritual center. He acknowledged that his vocation was to transform people, and help them to help themselves and others. He acknowledged that he was nothing short of an ambassador for Christ. As such, his goal was for the whole gospel to be spread to

[18] Franklin, *Another Day's Journey*, 98.

[19] Ibid., 122-124.

the whole world. This is Franklin's definition of a public theologian. According to Franklin, public theologians are committed to presenting their understandings of God along with their ethical principles and values to the public for scrutiny, discussion, and possible acceptance. Public theologians stand in their faith traditions to address people from all walks of life. Using Jesus as their model, public theologians are change agents who can facilitate the process of renewal to lead the local church in serving the community as voices for social righteousness.[20]

There are a number of critical issues oppressing countless inner-city neighborhoods, which the Church should recognize and get involved in relieving. Problems like homelessness, domestic violence, drugs, lack of day care centers, and unemployment, among others, are for some, an everyday occurrence in urban communities. The truth is that these situations occur more often than people may realize. Many churches have faced these types of dilemmas, prompting some neighborhoods to resent the Church and accuse them of non-support and abandoning disadvantaged neighborhoods. During these times, people cannot afford to be turned away by an institution that preaches love for one another, while it simultaneously fails to validate this reality.

[20] Franklin, *Another Day's Journey*, 89.

CHAPTER 4

DEVELOPING A THEOLOGY OF LEADERSHIP FROM AN ENTREPRENEURIAL PERSPECTIVE

Leadership beyond the Pulpit

While many churches are forming community development corporations (hereafter, CDCs) to support the work of the Church beyond the pulpit and four walls, a new generation of urban church pastors who are skilled in organization, creating partnerships, securing financial resources, and generating religious community is emerging.[1] This new generation of ministers does all this with a focus on the deeper needs of the urban neighborhoods that are adjacent to the churches they serve. They understand the assets that are in urban communities and how to mobilize and organize this human, physical, political, and social capital to leverage larger outside investment in their areas. This generation of urban pastors is more politically sophisticated, more independent, and less denominationally oriented.

Many churches across the country are developing and adopting a holistic vision of mission. The Christian ministry in the city center is an engagement with all the basic areas crucial to human life—spiritual, economic, education, health, and housing. There is

[1] Nile Harper, *Urban Churches: Vital Signs* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1999).

an intentional decision among this new breed of leaders to deal with basic needs of salvation, housing, health, and employment that has strengthened the whole community and the congregation.

There is also a growing consensus in planting interracial teams of pastors and their families in the neighborhoods, providing leadership, showing serious intent, providing more skills, and modeling commitment to interracial communities. This was evident in my personal study of New Song Community Church in Baltimore.[2] This church has been widely chronicled nationally because of its humble beginnings and the extent of its influence as it has grown. This church began in 1986 in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood on the West side of Baltimore as a new church development. Sandtown-Winchester is a largely African-American area of the city with over 50 percent unemployment, a median income of less than $10,000, decaying housing, and very inadequate health and education services.[3]

The initial vision came from an interracial team of six that included a careful demographic study of Baltimore's communities of need. Their purpose was to become part of a community, to enter into its life and struggles before starting to organize a church. They developed a theology of incarnation, as it were, in listening in a way that puts others first, sharing the world of their neighbors, bonding with the community, and

[2] This research was done in my second year of coursework for the Doctor of Ministry degree at Fuller Theological Seminary, between May 2006 and December 2006, as I prepared the post-seminar assignment.

[3] In this discussion I am indebted to the work of Mark Gornik in his book, *Small Changes, Big Differences: Setting the Foundation of a New Community* (Baltimore: New Song Community Church, 1996).

naming where they lived home.[4] They began a house church with a commitment to be an interracial congregation focused on doing Christian community development. From this small beginning, the New Song Community Church was born, nurtured, and developed into a lively congregation of over two hundred people, with an amazing diversity of creative ministries. This church also provides a new paradigm for effective ministry by not constructing a church building but constructing housing and health care facilities instead of a church building. With this, their intent was to send a powerful message of permanent commitment to serve people (the Church is primarily people) and uphold positive priorities.

Another lesson that can be learned from New Song Community Church is the importance of developing partnerships with the private and public sectors, including businesses, foundations, churches, voluntary organizations, and government agencies. Such partnerships lead to the creation of a strong network to provide necessary skills, knowledge, and financial resources. The church brought people with skills from beyond the area into the task of redevelopment of the community. The leadership team thought regionally for resources while it acted locally for planning and ownership within the community. This approach produces positive teamwork, energy, and real self-development.

[4] Mark R Gornik and Noel Castellanos, "How to Start a Christian Community Development Ministry," in *Restoring At-Risk Communities,* ed. John M. Perkins (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 220.

Leadership in a Team Concept

As a group, African-American churches are the best in the land at team-based leadership. Many observers have erroneously attributed this to the close-knit community that is said to exist among African Americans. Strangely, my research, which included visiting over forty African-American churches between 1995 and 2011, has consistently shown that if that camaraderie existed in the African-American community in decades past, it is no longer evident today. Family mobility, lifestyle fragmentation, isolation driven by mass media entertainment, and the competitiveness of our social and economic networks has negatively affected the natural bond that African Americans used to enjoy.[5]

Nevertheless, the best of the nation's African-American religious bodies rely heavily on leadership by teams rather than the outstanding gifts and charisma of a single dynamic leader. The strength of these teams is found in their blending of leaders who have complementary gifts and skills, their mutual passion for the same vision, a desire to give the credit to God rather than seek it for themselves, and the ability to work within the parameters set for their team by the senior pastor, who oversees all leadership activity within the ministry. These senior pastors deserve a lot of credit for controlling their egos long enough to give resources and platforms to other quality leaders. In the end, these leaders appear to be much stronger and capable than they are simply because of their willingness to turn loose the cumulative leadership capacity embodied within the congregation. En route to doing so, these pastors affirm and facilitate the leaders that form the core teams; that endorsement and continual support allow the teams to prosper.

[5] Barna, *African Americans and Their Faith*, 15.

The genius of this style of leadership is in the collaborative nature of the leader-follower relationship. Essentially, the pastors become the visionary team-builders, more like player-coaches than owners of a sports franchise. Just like player-coaches, they must maintain the balance of positional authority and personal leadership. They are given the authority to lead as long as results are obtained. They call many plays strategically but they must also fulfill that role as players on whom others depend. Unlike a monarchy, they do not have to rule by reason of birth; they earn respect, authority, and responsibility through their performance.[6]

In some ways, this team-orientation may be one of the greatest legacies of African American leadership: the desire to form coalitions of like-minded people who will use their gifts to labor side by side and foster positive outcomes, without regard to personal acclaim. In spite of living in an environment in which image and reputation are primary, numerous African-American leaders have toiled in anonymity, working behind the scenes to introduce serious change in the families, neighborhoods, communities, or regions in which they must minister. African-American pastors generally feel at ease with the idea of being the captain of a team rather than having to be the omnipotent and omniscient ruler of a nation. The respect they get from their congregants and the unity of focus that results compensate for any absence of public applause received. That, in fact, is one of many indicators that these are pastors involved in ministry for the right reasons.

One of the most often heard complaints about leaders is their tendency to micromanage the ministry. This penchant for control, however, is absent in the emerging

[6] In this discussion I am indebted to the work of Nile Harper in his book, *Urban Churches: Vital Signs* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1999).

church. There are several reasons for this. One reason is that genuine leaders realize that such a meddling only restrains the Church from making progress. Another is the fact that most pastors are either directing leaders (meaning they are big-picture, visionary types who have limited interest in details) or team-building leaders (indicating their interest is in people, not processes). Yet another reason is the different type of relationship that pastors have with their congregants. Geared to developing a truly interdependent work relationship, leaders are generally thrilled to leave the administrative dimension to people who are gifted in the area and whose passion for systems and details frees the leader to take on the challenging and exciting ministry tasks that they do best.

There are may be some historical reasons for the tendency to avoid micromanaging, too. Many of the current leadership structures have their roots in the rural, southern, post-Civil War environment in which the Church flourished. Most rural communities could not afford a full-time pastor, resulting in the recruitment of part-time leaders. Thus, while the hired pastor did the preaching and other ceremonial duties, the board of deacons ran the day-to-day affairs of the local church.

More often than not, the chairman of the deacons became a *de facto* pastor. The head deacon and the pastor had to forge a healthy working relationship since the unity between these leaders would determine the stability and potential of their church.[7] As modernization redefined society and ministry, the tendency of lay leaders to carry out many of the administrative and other nonessential ministry functions was retained. This arrangement made the "priesthood of all believers" more than just a quaint Bible phrase.

[7] Floyd Massey, Jr., and Samuel Berry McKinney, *Church Administration in the Black Perspective* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1976), 18.

It has assisted the laity in enjoying the freedom to minister while permitting the leader to focus on clarifying, communicating, protecting, and advancing the primary vision for the ministry.

In providing leadership in a team concept, it is also important to invest in developing effective disciples. God creates some to lead and some to follow, but all believers must refine whichever capacity has been entrusted to them. One of the secrets of effective pastoring is knowing how to develop people into good followers. In their book, *High Impact African-American Churches*, George Barna and Harry Jackson, Jr. explain that more than four out of every five congregants have not been called by God to serve in a leadership capacity, but those who are called to follow the leader need to know how to do so effectively.[8] Many pastors assume that if they lead, people will follow. They will-but they'll probably do so poorly. Great followers are worth their weight in gold-and nearly as rare.

Effective leaders have a keen sense of legacy: the people whose lives their ministry has touched. But to leave behind a cadre of great followers consumes a substantial parcel of resources. The observations of Barna and Jackson found that growing great followers takes the five "T"s. First, it takes "time." There are no shortcuts; leaders should plan on allocating many hours each week to raising up world-class followers. Second, it takes "training." Encouragement, instruction, feedback and, supervised participation are part of the process. Third, leaders must develop "tracks." Routines and practices that become part of the continuity make following possible and

[8] George Barna and Harry Jackson, Jr., *High Impact African-American Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2004), 60.

efficient. Fourth, it takes "truth." Honest feedback and godly wisdom are dispensed by someone who loves them and the Master whom they serve. Fifth and finally, it takes "trust." Mutual respect and honor enable the relationship to grow constantly. Eliminating or muting any of these effectively shortchanges the follower and limits his or her ability to add value through contributing to the congregation.

In order for leaders to grow terrific followers, the first step is to engage the followers with the vision and values of the ministry. Until the followers are sold out to those perspectives, they are simply playing a game and consuming resources. Further, disciples must know themselves well enough to identify their gifts and skills and to seek ways of using those capacities for the advancement of the vision. Disciples must also hold themselves to a high standard of performance. With church leaders motivating them to serve and mentoring them to excellence, disciples can make ministry fun, productive, and transforming.

When leaders are smart enough to realize that they are only as good as the disciples enable them to be, then they have the motivation they need to invest ample resources in those disciples. They are not just faceless units that add girth to the ministry; they are the lifeblood of the ministry and must be handled appropriately. Developing a culture of growth and respect for everyone brings about a ministry that is invulnerable because it has the two indispensable ingredients for effectiveness: vision-driven servant-leaders and vision-driven servant-disciples.

Leaders can also make an impact through collaboration. Once again, the history of Christian ministry in America explains one of the distinctive patterns seen in the African-American Church today. More than a century ago, before automobiles and telephones

reoriented the ways and places in which we live, many churches were led by pastors who oversaw multiple congregations. To get to those groups, preachers had to ride by horseback from one location to another. These preachers, known as circuit riders, were obviously limited in terms of how much time and attention they could devote to administrative details, organizational structure, person-to-person communications, meetings, and so forth. These leaders often converted this limitation into strength by developing social and spiritual connections among the various churches they led. Though separated by physical distance, these disparate congregations began to see the value of collaboration in ministry and occasionally joined together.

Leadership That Is Transformational

Despite widespread cynicism concerning leadership in society today, one can still be moved by the presence of authentic moral guidance. Perhaps the culture is waiting for more leaders of this sort. The problem is that they are not easily made. In fact, precisely what happens when a person become a leader is unknown. In his classic study of leadership, James MacGregor Burns has observed that "leadership is a process of morality to the degree that leaders engage with followers on the basis of shared motives and values and goals. Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage and satisfy the motives of followers."[9] Burns also distinguishes two types of leadership: transactional and transformational. Transactional leadership establishes temporary

[9] James E. Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row), 16.

contact with people related to exchanging valued things (jobs for votes, goods for money, or hospitality for a listening ear). Transformational leadership engages with others so that the leader and followers "raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality."[10] Transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both. Perhaps the best modern example is Gandhi. Burns contends, "Transcending leadership is dynamic leadership in the sense that the leaders throw themselves into a relationship with followers who will feel 'elevated' by it and often become more active themselves, thereby creating new cadres of leaders."[11]

Transformational leaders are authentic in their devotion and commitment. Authentic leaders are like diamonds, if you will, who typically exist in the rough, their value and potential unrecognized by most people. Over time a process of refinement occurs. The value within is hammered out through times of testing and crisis. Years of prison refined Mandela; a struggle with cancer gave Bernardin the power to teach people how to die with dignity; and a life devoted to serving the poor has transformed Mother Teresa into a saint who challenges the materialism of our time.

Leadership That Is Missional

There is a new leadership trend happening within the missional church.[12] The missional church understands the church that emphasizes an incarnational, servant approach and sees church not as a once-a-week gathering but as a community to which

[10] Burns, *Leadership*, 34.

[11] Ibid., 36.

[12] See Chapter 5 for a definition of the missional church.

one belongs that relates to the whole of life. It is a church that takes on the values of community, accountability and service. These are the qualities and values that the leader of the church of the future must take on. According to Alan Roxburgh, "a missional church is a community of God's people who live into the imagination that they are, by their very nature, God's missionary people living as a demonstration of what God plans to do in and for all of creation in Jesus Christ."[13] Missional leadership is first about the leader's character and formation. The second most important transition in fostering a missional posture in a local congregation is rethinking church leadership models that have been accepted as the status quo. This will require the development of a missional leadership approach that has a special emphasis on the apostolic function of church leadership, which was marginalized during the time of Christendom in favor of the pastor/teacher function.

This missional leadership approach will involve creating an apostolic environment throughout the life of the local church. The leader must encourage pioneering activity that pushes the church into new territory. However, because not all in the church will embrace such risk, the best approach will involve creating a sort of "R&D" or "skunk works" department in the church for those who are innovators and early adopters. A culture of experimentation must be cultivated where attempting new initiatives is expected, even if not all succeed. As pioneering activities bear fruit, and the stories of life change begin to bubble up within the church, an increasing number of people will begin to take notice and get involved.

[13] Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006).

There is a new breed of leadership within the missional movement that has developed an entrepreneurial model where whole systems of church life are being formed on the basis of the CEO leader who takes charge, sets growth goals, and targets "turnaround" congregations, much like a business CEO who comes in to lead a failing corporation.[14] This is the kind of spiritual superman mentality that comes in to save the day by guaranteeing success through the power of personality or strategic skill. As congregations face decline and recognize that their ways of going about being church are not reaching people, demand for this kind of leader grows and will continue to grow in the face of the anxiety and confusion that many congregations are experiencing.

Another kind of leadership that contributes to the notion of entrepreneurial faith, explains Roxburgh, is a model of a missional leader "who is a cultivator of an environment that discerns God's activities among the congregation and in its context. It is leadership that cultivates the practice of indwelling scripture and discovering places for experiment and risk as people discover that the Spirit of God's life-giving future in Jesus is among them."[15] Cultivation takes time and involves the rhythms and cycles of life. It cannot be rushed or made to happen. Cultivation is an art as well as a skill; it requires new habits, skills, beliefs, and attitudes.

As Roxburgh notes, the missional leader must be able to cultivate three kinds of awareness within a congregation for it to become entrepreneurial. First is the awareness of what God is doing among the people of the congregation. Second is the awareness of how a congregation can imagine itself as being the center of God's activities. Third is an

[14] Roxburgh and Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, 27.

[15] Ibid., 27.

awareness of what God is already up to in the congregation's context.[16] This requires a capacity for listening to and engaging the images, narratives, and stories of people, and understanding that people's lives are full of stress, anxiety, and confusion. It also requires an understanding that the world keeps changing and leaves them struggling to make sense of what was once familiar, comfortable, and manageable.

Missional leadership also requires the capacity to lead a congregation through all the phases of existence that Roxburgh calls "zones." These zones include "performative," "emergent," "reactive," "building," "transition," and "bridging."[17] These zones witness to the reality of a congregation's life cycle and the changes that many congregations undergo during their existence as a community of faith. Just as every person will experience the life cycle of birth, infancy, adolescence, adult, and mature adult, every congregation will experience the "zone" cycle. This is about God's engagement with the local church. There will always be some tension or a strategic inflection point between a church that is engaging its context and becoming conversant with its culture. Given the current environment, however, leaders need to cultivate an emergent culture within congregations. This takes time and requires skills not normally part of a leader's training or received in traditional seminary.

Roxburgh also describes the "missional change model" in his description of leadership that is missional. An important resource for this model which also forms the basis for change leadership (discussed in Chapter 5) is based on *The Diffusion of Innovation* by Everett Rogers. His research shows that innovation and integration of a

[16] Roxburgh and Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, 32.

[17] Ibid., 41.

new idea in a system happens according to a particular pattern. In most cases, new ideas, plans, and strategies fail to change a congregation. The history of such change is cluttered with an endless series of plans, programs, and visions that died either in birth, shortly thereafter, or as soon as the current leader left the church. There is a long list of leaders who have tried to initiate change, only to have struggled and felt a deep sense of pain in the process. It is no wonder that many leaders are discouraged about the possibility of substantive change. Roger's insights, drawn from many years of research, help us understand the key elements in getting change adopted in a system. Those insights are important to Roxburgh's change leadership model.

Roger's contribution is a model of the stages of successful diffusion of innovation:

1) *Knowledge*. People are exposed to the nature and function of in the innovation as well as to the changed context that requires innovation.
2) *Persuasion*. People are given the time and context that allow them to form a favorable attitude toward the innovation. In leading people, they need time to build confidence in both the leader and process before they are willing to trust change. Transition issues must be addressed before people are ready to act in entrepreneurial faith.
3) *Decision*. People decide to commit to an innovation in their own way.
4) *Experimentation and implementation*. People learn to put the innovation to use and this initiate the business of faith.
5) *Confirmation and reinforcement*. As people continue to practice implementing an innovation, they grow in their ability to function with new practices; they come to recognize that they are operating in a new way.[18]

This model offers missional leaders and the church of the future a way to cultivate an environment in which entrepreneurial imagination can thrive. Leaders must be able to function in uncomfortable environments. The missional leader here operates moving back and forth across the life cycles of the people for whom they serve, creating a space

[18] Roxburgh and Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, 82.

for people to dialogue, evaluate, and experiment within the field of theological entrepreneurship.

There is a six-step process that Roxburgh discusses for cultivating transformation that leads to leadership that is missional and ultimately entrepreneurial: 1) Take stock of what you know; 2) Know yourself as a leader; 3) Listen; 4) Focus on key areas and issues; 5) Develop an action plan; and 6) Commit.[19] Using this process helps leaders to understand the importance of feedback and how to identify where leaders can cultivate new capacities for being the church of the future.

Leadership Qualities That Lead to Change

It is said that people resist few things more than change. Even when making a change promises to improve conditions for all involved, those affected by it still experience anxiety. One finds security in familiar surroundings, even if those surroundings are not to one's liking. To leave the familiar for the untested makes most people uneasy.

But others thrive on change, so they sometimes have trouble understanding why so many resist it. If efficiency and productivity can be enhanced and service improved and profits increased, then they cannot understand why anyone would hesitate. But change involves risk, and most people are uncomfortable with risk. That probably explains why many churches continue to maintain the same programs and ministries that have been in place for years, even when the communities around the churches change: perhaps younger families are moving in, more children are living with single parents,

[19] Roxburgh and Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, 112.

governments are cutting back on social programs, or families are adjusting to the economy in its current state of recession. The needs are constantly changing, but sadly the ministries usually remain the same.

The person committed to a life of entrepreneurial faith—whether a pastor or layperson, a business leader or worker—is an agent of change. No matter what they do for a living, entrepreneurs will embrace the chance to take advantage of new opportunities. Changing a church's worship style seems to disrupt a community of faith more than any other element. Simply forgetting the "Doxology" one week (or, if the church does not sing the "Doxology," adding it in) could bring about major repercussions. People are routine-oriented. Many feel that "new" is not always "improved." For example, when Coke changed its traditional formula, millions were unhappy. But change is a constant in people's lives, and every change creates new opportunities. Times of change are what excite entrepreneurs. Their attitude is that routines create ruts, and the only difference between a rut and a grave is the dimensions.

Therefore, apart from the risk factor, one wonders why people resist change. At Bestselling author and international management consultant Margaret Wheatley said the following at her seminar: "The primary issue among leaders today is fear and anxiety. When we become fearful, we stop thinking. We become internal. This, in turn, creates more chaos within."[20] Fear creates resistance to change.

Another underlying issue for people who prefer the status quo is control. Wheatley observed that recent studies show that organizations built on teams, rather than

[20] Margaret Wheatley, seminar titled, "Training for Transformation," sponsored by Concern for America, Santa Ana, California, March 16-18, 2009.

on hierarchical leadership, are 35 percent more productive. But most corporations in America do not embrace a team concept, even though productivity is supposedly the goal. This is true in the Church as well. Church leaders want to be effective in outreach to their communities, but they are reluctant to release control.[21] But spiritual entrepreneurs, being change agents, are willing to release control to achieve a vision.

In fact, spiritual entrepreneurs provoke change by creating opportunities. They will introduce a new idea or a new way of utilizing an existing ministry or church program just to get people thinking "change." Entrepreneurs do not have to be inventors, however, creating something completely new, such as the modern-day equivalent of the wheel. Instead, many entrepreneurs are innovators, finding new and exciting ways to use what already exists. The wheel is useful for transportation, but also is central to the operation of any number of amusement park rides. The wheel is commonly used as a steering device, but also can be used as a gear, a pulley, a spool, a measuring device, and any number of other purposes. The entrepreneur looks at a common wheel and sees not a wheel but a marvelous circular device that can be utilized in a tremendous variety of ways to improve the lives of people.

Entrepreneurs have the ability to see far beyond an item's current use. They identify opportunities and possibilities that others miss. They make small changes to a product or process to meet whatever new need might arise. While entrepreneurs impact all types of organizations, they all share common characteristics. First, entrepreneurs focus on what can be, not what is. They approach challenges as opportunities for

[21] From a roundtable conversation with Margaret Wheatley and Paul Sorenson in Scottsdale, Arizona, 9-11 October 2003.

launching new initiatives. Whenever entrepreneurs see a need arise or an obstacle appear—in a product, in an economy, in society as a whole—they investigate to see how to meet that challenge. Entrepreneurial thinking never settles for "as is."

Second, entrepreneurs are disciplined. They identify their mission and keep that in front of them as they assess opportunities. While they have passion to pursue new opportunities, they do not waste time and resources on ventures they know they are not called to do. They do not dilute their efforts by following every opportunity. Disciplined entrepreneurs may be involved in several projects at once, but they look for links between them to best use their time, money, and energy.

Third, entrepreneurs know when to pull the trigger to say go rather than continuing to calculate the risks. Entrepreneurs know it is sometimes more costly to be slow rather than to be wrong. Perfection is not the goal. And because plans can and will go awry, entrepreneurs are able to quickly adapt to new circumstances as things develop and change.

Fourth, entrepreneurs are artists more than engineers. They are leaders more than managers. They capture possibilities rather than getting mired in current reality. Entrepreneurs are creative; they are players in the game rather than coaches on the sidelines. They sit in with a weekend jazz band rather than conducting an orchestra. Entrepreneurs let their imaginations take them places that the typical thinker would never explore. Dreaming big is never a waste of time for the entrepreneur. On the contrary, it is the heart of entrepreneurship. An entrepreneurial organization may never be the best in its field, but it is likely to be very good in several related fields and can be very successful.

Finally, entrepreneurs burn with passion. They pursue new opportunities with single-mindedness and zeal. The hours to launch a new venture can be endless, and the rewards—at least in the short term—meager. If there is no passion, if the new opportunity becomes a job, such a scenario does not fit the picture of an entrepreneur. Those who have an entrepreneurial mindset wake up excited about conquering the unconquerable. Entrepreneurs love the journey as much as they love the end result.

Innovation, pursuing opportunities, pulling the trigger, seeing the possibilities, and living and working with passion all lead to change—something an entrepreneur cannot help but create. The same traits are true of spiritual entrepreneurs. Expressed differently, the entrepreneur of faith dreams big, sees possibilities not limitations, burns with passion to meet needs, enlists and leads others in the cause, knows his or her mission, and innovates to maximize the effectiveness and reach of existing programs and ministries.

As it relates to developing a theology of leadership from a entrepreneurial perspective, a term that is very prevalent in the business sector that is used is "change management." Change management is a systematic approach to dealing with change, both from the perspective of an organization and on the individual level. A somewhat ambiguous term, change management has at least three different aspects, including: adapting to change, controlling change, and effecting change. A proactive approach to dealing with change is at the core of all three aspects. For an organization, change management means defining and implementing procedures and/or technologies to deal with changes in the business environment and to profit from changing opportunities.

Successful adaptation to change is as crucial within the local church as it is in the natural world. Just like plants and animals, churches and the members who are a part of the church inevitably encounter changing conditions that they are powerless to control. The more effectively one deals with change, the more likely one is to thrive. Adaptation might involve establishing a structured methodology for responding to changes in the business environment (such as a fluctuation in the economy, or a threat from a competitor) or establishing coping mechanisms for responding to changes in the church.

John Kotter, a Harvard Business School professor and leading thinker and author on organizational change management, provides a helpful model for understanding and managing change. Each stage acknowledges a key principle identified by Kotter relating to people's response and approach to change, in which people see, feel, and then change. This can be extrapolated to the leader of the church of the future as it leads for adaptive change. Kotter's eight-step change model can be summarized as follows: 1) Increase urgency: inspire people to move, and make objectives real and relevant; 2) Build the guiding team: get the right people in place with the right emotional commitment, and the right mix of skills and levels; 3) Get the vision right: get the team to establish a simple vision and strategy, and focus on emotional and creative aspects necessary to drive service and efficiency; 4) Communicate for buy-in: involve as many people as possible; communicate the essentials simply and to appeal and respond to people's needs; de-clutter communications; and make technology work for you rather than against; 5) Empower action: remove obstacles, enable constructive feedback and lots of support from leaders, and reward and recognize progress and achievements; 6) Create short-term wins: set aims that are easy to achieve in bite-size chunks and manageable numbers of

initiatives; also, finish current stages before starting new ones; 7) Do not let up: foster and encourage determination and persistence as well as ongoing change; also, encourage ongoing progress reporting and highlight achieved and future milestones; and 8) Make change stick: reinforce the value of successful change via recruitment, promotion, and new change leaders; weave change into the culture.[22]

[22] John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Press, 1996), 34.

PART THREE

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

CHAPTER 5

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Church in Scripture

> When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit.
>
> —Acts 2:1-4

The birth of the Church happened over two thousand years ago and was born out of the Spirit of God. Its purpose was to witness to the healing activity of God. The Church's relationship to Jesus Christ is not simply to be identified with a historical person. The Church's identification with Jesus is its DNA.[1] Barger's definition of a church's DNA is its spiritual makeup and formation of the "authentic" church that is grounded in Jesus Christ and the resurrection. Jesus speaks in John 15:4 about his being the vine and the Church being the branch. The vine and the branch are of the same DNA. The Church as the body of Christ is more than just a metaphor. It is reality.

The Church also is known as a community that "gathers" for prayer and proclamation, as well as celebration and fellowship (Mt 18:20; 1 Cor 14:23). It is also a

[1] Rick Barger, *A New and Right Spirit* (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2005), 95-98.

people alive to Christ in the community (Lk 13:26; 24:13-16). The wider community of neighbors and neighborhood, in all of its pain, struggle, joy and identity, is also the place where the Church is to have its presence and practice service and love.[2] The community is not someplace that is fled or avoided or condemned; it is the site of Christian incarnation. It is where the Church's faith is lived out and seen by others, its life is formed in such a way that Christ humiliated and exalted can be seen.

Both Luke (in his gospel and Acts) and Paul (in his letter to the Corinthian church) describe the Church of the poor and suffering, one that is evangelical in the gospel sense. This "church of the poor" is a fellowship amidst the hurting and the harmed, the excluded and the suffering. As Moltmann concludes in *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, "The church loses its fellowship with the messianic mission of Jesus if it is not 'the people of the beatitudes' and does not consist of the poor, the mourners, the meek, those who hunger for righteousness, the pure in heart and the persecuted."[3]

God's reign draws the Church into a new story, a drama that moves forward in light of its ending with the new creation, demonstrated by the presence of the gospel among the poor. This calls into being communities of faith in Christ that are good news in the urban centers. Because of the gospel of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit, life in and for the kingdom of God is the primary orientation of the Church. Paul writes, "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rm 14:17). The kingdom finds expression in a gathered group of people who testify in worship and embrace those practices that share its life.

---

[2] Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Eardmans, 1998), 72-73.

[3] Jurgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 81.

The Church also exists, as noted in Scripture, as a means of Christian formation and discipleship. In particular, this relates to how people care for one another, develop relationships, and transform lives. The Church, therefore, is not merely a collection of individuals but a body built around Christ that focuses on God's reign. The many images of the Church in Scripture—such as the body of Christ, the people of God, and the household of the Spirit—are all pictures of community.

Another aspect of the Church as noted in Scripture is to bear witness to Jesus and the hope of the kingdom. Christian witness is about story-telling—the body of Christ bearing witness to the story of God's salvation (Acts 1:8; cf. Luke 24:47-49). As a community of love, faith, and hope, the Church is God's instrument for the transmission of the gospel. As a body of Christ, the Church is called to live for the peace, love, and joy of God's reign. In the book of Acts, when the Church shared its life and possessions, thus demonstrating that God's Spirit was in their midst, the result was dramatic: "And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47).

The Church in the African American Tradition

The African-American Church in America, despite its African heritage, is a profoundly "American" institution. The African-American Church has been and continues to function as the hub of civil society and remains the center of social life in many Black communities. It is the community's source of aid and philanthropy, a center for learning and literacy, a zone for political education and mobilization, an organizer of financial capital, and keeper of collective cultural memory. During the relief efforts after

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, many local African-American congregations engaged in rapid-response, life-saving activity that prevented an even greater tragedy.

African-American churches typically asset-rich institutions and generally among the wealthiest institutions in their communities. They often own the sanctuary and other property; they manage a weekly cash flow; they enjoy influence with, and access to, financial institutions; they employ people; they make charitable donations to the community; and they are symbols of collective economics (saving, pooling resources, acquiring land and property, and so forth). Often the churches themselves are financial institutions or they sponsor credit unions that hold savings accounts and make loans. Collectively, black churches control billions of dollars in assets that can be leveraged for the good of the community.

African-American churches continue to be political power brokers in their communities. Historically, as one of the few places in which Black people could gather on a regular basis, churches picked up the agenda of pursuing freedom and full participation in American society. The political culture of African-American churches was multidimensional and spanned the spectrum from nonpartisan voter education to endorsement of preferred candidates to supporting clergy and laity who sought elective office. Among their many political strategies, some sought to negotiate and cooperate with political power structures to produce change, while others emphasized the need for a more radical approach to change. Still others rejected politics and focused solely upon saving and rescuing souls from the corrosive nature of secular society.

The historical significance of the African-American Church appears to be in decline. Scholars have demonstrated that congregations in low- to moderate-income

communities have modest outreach to the surrounding community.[4] Most African-American churches are "commuter congregations" in which a majority of members reside one or more miles from the sanctuary. Their members tend to lack profound knowledge of the local neighborhood and do not offer a broad range of social services to their neighbors.[5]

The African-American Church has been very involved in spiritual entrepreneurship; leaders know how to produce, package, market, and distribute user-friendly spirituality for the masses. The spiritual product line they market addresses spiritual, social and physical needs. The African-American Church has been known across the years as speaking truth to power—a systematic justice. It is a product line that involves risk-taking and the investment of large amounts of human and financial resources. It involves political processes and almost always involves conflict and stress in the community. It deals with institutional power that is located outside the neighborhood and not easily subject to direct citizen influence. This product line markets a type of justice, a radical discipleship that is necessary to create a democratic society that works for the good of all people.

At its best, the African-American Church has been a prophetic voice in this country. At its best, the African-American Church has stood and still stands in judgment of America. Never a part of the power structure, the African-American Church has often raised its voice on behalf of justice in the midst of injustice. It has demanded that

---

[4] Michael Owen and R. Drew Smith, "Congregations in Low-Income Neighborhoods and the Implications for Social Welfare Policy Research," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (September 2005): 316-39.

[5] Ibid.

America live up to its creed to respect the dignity of every human being. The African-American Church has not made the mistake of equating this nation's flag with the cross of Christ. The African-American Church has had a healthy fear of government and religion getting too close because living at the margins has taught the African-American Church that politics and politicians are fickle at best. To be sure, the African-American Church has not always been faithful to its prophetic role and has not always spoken a word of judgment to power. In fact, the African-American Church has at times been as quiet as White Protestantism has been. However, the Church has often provided a model for authentic speech at crucial moments. It has also learned how to speak so that it is heard.

Living at the margins has given the African-American Church a view of the cracks and crevices in America's self-identity. Living at the margins, the African-American Church has a glimpse of the "disconnect" between what America is and what it claims to be. Living at the margins has allowed the African-American Church to see the good and the bad, as well as the laudable and the shameful in America. Living at the margins has permitted the African-American Church to witness the abuse of power even as it has evidence of the good power can do. Living at the margins means that the African-American Church can speak to power on behalf of those who are at the margins because it knows that its legitimacy comes from the margins, not from the centers of power.

The Missional Church

Any discussion of a prophetic, urban, holistic ministry must also include the missional Church. When it comes to being missional, it seems everyone wants in on the action. The rise of the missional Church is the probably the single biggest development in Christianity since the Reformation. The post-Reformation Church of the modern era differed remarkably from its medieval predecessor. The missional Church will just as dramatically distinguish itself from what is now known as "church."

Whereas the Reformation resulted in a plethora of denominations distinguished by doctrine and polity, the missional movement actually simplifies the taxonomy of Christianity into two groups: "those who get it and those who don't." Being "missional" is a way of living, not an affiliation or activity. Its emergence springs from a belief that God is changing his conversation with the world and with the Church. Being missional involves an active engagement with this new conversation to the point that it guides every aspect of the life of the missional believer. To think and to live missionally means seeing all of life as a way to be engaged with the mission of God in the world.

This missional understanding of Christianity is undoing Christianity as a religion. The expression of the Christian movement in North America is fundamentally altering before our very eyes. The shifts are tectonic. They involve both form and content. These developments go way beyond denominational affiliations, party labels (liberal, conservative, mainline, evangelical); corporate worship styles (contemporary, traditional); program methodological approaches (purpose-driven, seeker-friendly); or

even cultural stances (postmodern, emergent, and emerging).[6] The missional development goes to the very heart of what the Church is, not just what it does. It redefines the Church's role in the world in a way that breaks sharply with prevailing church notions. These differences are so large as to make missional and non-missional expressions of Christianity practically unrecognizable to each other.

While much has been made of the deconstructive nature of missional Christianity, this aspect of the movement needs to be seen for what it is. In the early stages of movements, proponents have to distinguish the new from the status quo. What it is not is as important as what it is. However, as the movement matures, it becomes more fully defined and capable of supporting its own existence, without having to live off siphoned energy or allergic reactions to the prior "thing-it-is-not." Actually, movements that cannot get to this stage do not survive; they last only as long as the reactionary core can generate enthusiasm among the initial adherents and the disgruntled they recruit. In early stages of movements, the new "thing" and the "thing-it-is-not" often alternatively seek mutual ground and work to make the other go away.

We are still in the early days of the missional movement. Although it has been on the screen of radicals and revolutionaries for some decades, it has just recently broken into mainstream attention in the Church. This means that for now, the discussion of what missional is must still include how it is distinguished from what it is not. What it is not is "church-as-usual." Early and previous writers in the missional movement have rehearsed the failures of the Church and have given voice to the frustration of those who yearn for

[6] Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 61-62

more than they are experiencing in their current church lives. Various levels of deconstruction have been necessary to help people see that something different is possible.

The Church is presently in a kind missional renaissance, where the confluence of thinking by key thinkers is reshaping the landscape of believers' imagination of what they think the Church can and should be. One benefit of the missional renaissance is that one can now begin to say what missional is, not just what it is not. This ability in itself will accelerate the movement. The result will be that within a few years, it will be impossible to think of the Church in the old way, as something one "went to" or "participated in" or "joined" or "attended."

There have been numerous conversations about the missional movement over the past decade. In my observations and research for this dissertation, some key transitions or shifts have emerged that must be negotiated in moving from an institutional church experience into a missional experience of life and faith. The shifts are explained in the early stages of this paper and are explored throughout in terms of their implications.

As Reggie McNeal explains in his work, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church*, becoming missional will require that one makes three shifts, both in one's thinking and in one's behavior: 1) "From internal to external in terms of ministry focus"; 2) "From program development to people development in terms of core activity"; and 3) "From church-based to kingdom-based in terms of leadership agenda."[7] These shifts are the signature characteristics of what missional means. They are not

[7] Reggie McNeal, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 65.

destinations; they are compass settings. These shifts point to the Church of the future. They will move the Church as primarily a refuge, conservator, and institutional activity in a post-Christendom culture to being a risky, missionary, organic force in the increasingly pre-Christian world in North America. As McNeal notes, these three shifts call for a new scorecard for the missional church. The typical church scorecard (how many, how often, how much) does not mesh with a missional or entrepreneurial view of what the Church should be monitoring in light of its mission in the world.[8]

The Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ

Despite an outreach activity here and there, many churches are not really outreach-focused churches. They might give out holiday gift baskets to needy families, or sponsor an annual Bring-a-Friend-to-Church day, or raise money to support the local homeless shelter. But their ministries flow more from skin-deep compassion ("Those poor homeless people") or superficial obligation ("There, that takes care of that!") than a genuine longing to see God's will done in their communities as it is in heaven. The dominant understanding is that the Church exists to serve the needs—spiritual, social, and relational—of the membership.

In Ronald Sider's book, *Churches That Make a Difference,* the author quotes Rev. Tom Theriault, who serves as mission pastor at a wonderful holistic congregation, Community Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He writes about the tension between "inreach" and "outreach":

> I've gotten a lot of mileage from my M & M soap box . . . the "More and More for Me and Mine Syndrome," the "What-can-you-do-for-me-today,-God gospel."

[8] McNeal, *Missional Renaissance*, 66.

> As in the time of Jesus, many are looking for an M & M Messiah, a savior who will deliver us from all manner of oppressions (and depressions and repressions and dysfunctions). As with Jesus' contemporaries, we are frustrated, if not infuriated (Luke 4:30f), by a savior who is for the world. When He turns the "M & M's" right-side-up and into "W-W's" . . . a "We are for the World" gospel, we have trouble.
>
> To be sure, ours is a delivering God. But He delivers for a purpose. He delivers us out of our dead-end obsession with self and into the mainstream of His life-giving water that is destined for the nations (Rev. 22:2). We want a "sit and-soak Savior," One who fills our little hot tubs up with all kinds of soothing blessings. What we really have is a "Get up and GO God," One who soothes and saves so that He can launch us out (the root of the word for "mission" is the same as for "missile") into His Kingdom purposes to soothe and save the world. Hot tubs are great, but if you spend too much time in one you shrivel up and get sick. Same is true for the bath of blessings that our wonderful Savior provides for us. The blessings are meant to be fuel in our little rockets, rockets that have a trajectory set by the Word of God (Luke 4). If we stop with merely basking in the blessings of salvation, we, our families, our churches, will shrivel up and get sick. A body needs exercise, and so does the Body of Christ. The mission of Christ is the exercise regimen prescribed by the Ultimate Personal Trainer.[9]

Continuing with this metaphor, to prescribe the proper exercise for a human body, trainers have to know what the body is designed to do. Internally focused churches are busily doing an incomplete set of exercises because they have a flawed understanding of what the church body is designed to do. An inwardly focused congregation must be led to examine such questions as: What is the church designed to do? What is the church's mission?

When believers hear the word "mission," many think of what some Christians do "over there" (that is, in other countries). The word has come to be identified with special projects and trips. But mission has more to do with the church's purpose than its programs. As David Bosch explains, "Mission is not primarily an activity of the church,

[9] Rev. Tom Theriault, Mission Pastor at Community Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as quoted by Ronald Sider, *Churches That Make a Difference* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books), 147.

but an attribute of God. God is a missionary God. . . . Mission is thereby seen as a movement from God to the world: the church is viewed as an instrument of that mission. . . . There is church because there is mission, not vice versa." Holistic ministry, when it is placed within the context of mission, answers the question, How are God's character and saving actions expressed through our church in the world?

The Church's mission has three basic components: the Church is to be a witness to God's kingdom, an agent of God's kingdom, and the sign of God's kingdom. First, the Church witnesses to God's kingdom by proclaiming the Good News of Christ. With lips and lives, the body of believers offers testimony to the redemptive power of salvation by faith. To moral relativists and skeptics, the Church preaches Jesus as the way, truth, and life; to poor and oppressed persons, the Church announces the coming of the Savior; to oppressors and offenders, the Church speaks out on behalf of God's justice and righteousness; to those ensnared by violence and prejudice, the Church tells of the reconciling work of the cross. Sometimes believers' proclamation is directed toward those outside the local church, in evangelism; sometimes proclamation is directed toward the church body, in preaching and teaching; sometimes it is directed toward God, in worship.

Second, the Church not only points to God's coming kingdom but it is an agent of its inception. Paul addresses Christians as "co-workers for the kingdom of God" (Col 4: 11). The Church shares God's compassion for those in need, God's righteous indignation at injustice, and God's holy wrath over violations of moral law. The Church also follows God's example of active intervention in response. The Church is God's instrument for bringing about his desired changes in individuals and in society as a whole (the Church is

not God's only instrument, but it is a crucial one). Though not presuming to bring about the kingdom by its own efforts or to establish a "Christian nation," the Church prepares the way for the full reign of Christ by continuing the ministry of Christ and doing the work of the kingdom. The Church's deeds of love and power anticipate the coming final restoration of the cosmos.[10]

Third, the Church serves as a sign of God's kingdom by modeling the Good News in the community of faith. In his earthly ministry, Christ planted the seeds of a new Spirit-filled community who would continue to live out the kingdom principles that he proclaimed and demonstrated. As it modeled redeemed socioeconomic relations, this new community began to challenge the status quo of the larger society at many points. The early Christians showed they were different in their attitude toward material things; in their hope and courage in the face of persecution; in their compassion for poor, disabled, and other marginalized people; in the way they treated their enemies; and above all in the way they cared for one another. While waiting for Jesus' full reign to be inaugurated, the Church is to give the world a foretaste of its glory. "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father," Jesus said (Jn 14:9). In the same way, comments Bishop Dickie Robbins, "The only God many people are going to see will be the church. So we consecrate ourselves to be the representation of who God is in this locality." Another church member put it simply, "Before people read the Bible, they will read you first."

The three dimensions of mission are interrelated. The Church engages in ministries of service and advocacy as an instrument of God's kingdom, giving people a

[10] David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1992), 390.

taste of the promise of shalom that the Church proclaims and embodies in its fellowship. Through outreach the Church invites people to enter God's kingdom and join a faith community dedicated to living out kingdom values. As "the human community that experiences and communicates the saving intention of God," the Church becomes the agency by which God brings blessing to all human communities (Gn 12:1-3).[11] The various aspects of church life are to be integrated around this holistic mission. Witness and service, fellowship and worship, preaching and advocacy all flow together through the heart of the congregation out into the lives of others.

The Levels of Community Development in Engaging the Business of Faith

There are five distinct but overlapping phases in engaging the business of faith. Each phase rests upon a body of theoretical knowledge, each possessing its own learning agenda and classic texts. The church of the future must be engaged in at least five levels of service to the larger community, according to Robert M. Franklin in his book, *Another Day's Journey*.[12] Franklin notes that congregations first engage in basic charity when they provide immediate, direct relief to the hungry, the homeless, those requiring medical care, and others in need. The second level of service is sustained support to help people become self-reliant and capable of securing and holding employment. The third level is social service delivery, which involves "long-term institutional commitment to providing services such as child and elder care, literacy skills, and job training and placement to

[11] John Driver, *Images of the Church in Mission* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997), 12.

[12] Franklin, *Another Day's Journey*.

local residents and to others that can afford it."[13] The fourth level is political advocacy, which involves a congregation or coalition of faith communities in representing the needs of the least advantaged in society before the government. The fifth level is comprehensive community development. At this level, churches take the lead or serve as partners in the comprehensive revitalization and development of a community, taking care of housing needs, strengthening small businesses, sponsoring large retail and franchise entities, acquiring and providing credit and venture capital, and engaging in other enterprises to encourage job creation and self-sufficiency.

The church of the future would recognize that churches could create and sustain human community better than almost any other urban institution. It is in the very nature of a faith-based body to generate the sense of belonging, trust, symbolic meaning, and capacity to care for one another that is so critical to urban neighborhoods. Churches should be the intermediate-level communities that help people deal with the larger impersonal structures beyond their local neighborhoods, and that affirm individuals and families on a more personal level.

Urban churches, more than any other institutions, are places where people of all ages—children, youth, young adults, older adults—can experience acceptance, affirmation, and encouragement, rooted in the unconditional love of God. Congregations can demonstrate in their worship, education, fellowship, and evangelism that people are valuable not for what they can do, but as persons. The continuing personal support of urban churches, which is the focus of this project, can become the spiritual power that motivates people to take risks for justice and make sacrifices for the common good.

---

[13] Franklin, *Another Day's Journey*, 105-6.

As people in the communities surrounding urban churches are supported, new life also comes to the churches, as members are brought together to do the work of compassion, community rebuilding, and justice. Worship, Bible study, and pastoral ministry take on a deeper meaning and urgency as the result of engagement in the struggles for affordable housing, economic development, community health care, improved education, family life support, and the reduction of crime.

Resources for Ministry

In this church of the future, which uses the principles of "the business of faith" as defined above, an increased sense of community and a commitment to justice work can lead urban congregations to seek out a variety of resources. As they seek new resources, they will have a new understanding that asset development and financial resources are potential spiritual power. Human and economic resources are part of God's creation. Churches will learn how to see the potential strengths of people and find the potential economic assets in underdeveloped communities. Such an approach could mean envisioning what could be done with vacant land, old buildings, or unemployed people, and creating new uses for untapped resources. A positive approach to older neighborhoods empowers people to take new actions for their own self-development.

Many urban churches realize that resources for ministry can come from a whole metropolitan region, not merely from within the church or from one neighborhood. The practical development of metropolitan partners in ministry greatly strengthens the prophetic urban church. This church of the future will create networks of

communication, financial support, technical skills, and political connections that are important for influencing policy, structures, and projects.

One resource that is available to the church of the future is the creation of non-profit corporations (also known as 501(c)(3) corporations) to utilize funding from foundations, businesses, government agencies, and individual donors who will not give to churches directly. Churches are learning how to compete successfully for financial resources along with other non-profit organizations. There is a growing realization that urban churches should not be limited to doing only that which members can financially support for their giving. Good stewardship means using imagination to secure much greater resources from beyond the local community.

This partnership between church and society involves collaboration and mutual support. It encourages doing what one does best and supporting one another in such endeavors. It recognizes, uses, and celebrates the gifts that each has been given for serving the common good (1Cor 12:7). Its objective is to build up the church in love (Eph 4:16), and its ultimate goal is the glory and praise of God (Eph 3:21). Within the society there are many needs, including spiritual, physical, financial, educational, social, and economic needs. Ministers and churches need to be more involved in urban renewal, in using public and private housing, and in helping society better utilize the social capital within their reach. Church leaders need to be prepared to deal with the concern about the well-being of people. But economic development is not enough, which will be important for the church of the future to remember as it deals with foundations, government, and the private sector. Economic development without some moral development as well will

place churches and institutions in the same troubles that our nation is in at the present time, in which people may have money but few morals.

Further, in moving toward the church of the future, urban congregations are generating new financial resources for faith-based community ministries by creating new businesses. According to Harper, they could be involved in a variety of business enterprises: owning and operating affordable housing, developing cooperative enterprises for construction, organizing community schools, forming job training and employment placement centers, operating restaurants, managing real estate, running bakeries and commercial catering services, making low-interest loans for starting small businesses, brokering home repair services, and recording and marketing religious music CDs.[14] The two common themes in all of these enterprises are that they strengthen local community life and they put local people to work.[15]

Developing Human Capital

This church of the future will also usher in a new generation of urban church pastors who will be skilled at organizing, creating partnerships, securing financial resources, and generating religious community. They will do all of this with a focus on serving the deeper needs of urban neighborhoods. Most urban church pastors understand the assets that are in urban communities and how to mobilize these human and physical assets to leverage larger investment in these areas. This generation of urban pastors is more politically sophisticated, more independent, and less denominationally oriented.

---

[14] Nile Harper, *Urban Churches, Vital Signs* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1999), 8-9.

[15] Ibid.

There is in many urban churches a kind of earthly wisdom about life in the human family. There is an appreciation of the family as an essential nurturing reality. There is rich experience with diverse forms of family within the congregation. Mentoring—giving the gift of affirmation and discipline in a spirit of love—is widely practiced in urban churches that are redeveloping. Often it is this spiritual nurture that enables persons to turn their lives around and make new beginnings. This is the business of faith in action. Mentoring people at risk, with unconditional love, is taking place in every major city through business of faith ministries. There is a new appreciation of the capacity of faithful Christians to reclaim troubled urban youth and a strong emphasis on strengthening families.[16]

This church of the future will revitalize itself by new members from diverse racial and ethnic groups. New members are often attracted by changing patterns of worship, new leadership, vigorous community ministries, and strong spiritual life. With this in place, these churches will find ways to integrate personal and social justice ministries. In this church of the future, urban churches do have the human, social, and spiritual gifts that are most important for renewing and rebuilding communities. Their gifts are intangible, but crucial gifts of the spirit. They build trust, social cohesion, and human bonding which results in communities which are strong enough to produce positive results for the larger neighborhoods. These social gifts are the net gain of human energy, beyond what is needed for survival, coming from cooperative action that creates new goods and services needed by the larger community. It is the inner resource that lifts up new and indigenous leadership; it is the human asset that helps empower previously

[16] Harper, *Urban Churches, Vital Signs*, 297-98.

uninvolved people. It is the seedbed for new ideas; it is the social generator of new hope for a positive future.

In many urban churches, the deep experience of suffering and oppression has sensitized people, given them the unusual insight, created the capacity for inclusiveness, and forged the strength to have persistence. These are the gifts that enable people to engage in visioning, advocating, motivating, educating, evangelizing, organizing, developing, and affirming. It is from such faith-based gifts that powerful deeds come forth.

Beyond Charity toward Justice

The church of the future will go beyond individual acts of Christian charity toward more organized, collaborative action for justice. This movement can be related to the revitalization that can happen and has already started to happen in some urban churches and surrounding communities. Acts of charity, service, and justice are overlapping.[17] They all have positive value as well as limitations. They are not mutually exclusive, yet each has distinct and defining qualities. They are interrelated and can be best understood on a continuum of complexity and levels of influence. This project relates to the Church moving beyond charity toward justice, where networks and collaborative partnerships are formed will the goal of changing public policy and structures to create new and more just conditions in urban communities.

From a Christian theological perspective, charity is rooted in sacrificial love as seen in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It its ultimate meaning, charity is the unconditional love that God freely gives to humankind, as expressed in

[17] Harper, *Urban Churches Vital Signs*, 4-5.

Jesus Christ. Over the centuries, the Church has taught that charity is the greatest Christian virtue. In some traditions, it is understood to be the preeminent empowering divine spirit for human social life—a gift of God's grace, which makes it possible for people to live in community. Christian theology came to understand charity in two ways. On the one hand, it is God's gift, which enables sinful humankind to be forgiving, put the interests of others first, and live together in true community. Here the emphasis is on living in community, suffering with one another in mutual burden-bearing, and supporting one another without counting the cost. On the other hand, charity is understood to be works of love, acts of mutual aid and duty of Christians, as in the great commandment, "Love God with all your heart, soul and mind and love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22:37, 39). This perspective emphasizes personal deeds of mercy and acts of compassion within the local community. This summarizes the church of the future in the context of ministry. In summary, charity is understood as the central virtue of Christians, modeled in Jesus, and as the spiritual power that motivates persons to acts of compassion at the individual and social level. Believers are able to love because God has first loved them. The motivating power of love enables individuals and groups to act unselfishly for the common good.[18]

There are significant limits to what charity can do. Ordinarily, charity deals with personal needs of an immediate nature, and does not deal with the root causes of injustice and human suffering. Sometimes charity can become a barrier to doing the more difficult work of justice. In some churches, there is pride in giving financial support to charitable organizations that serve poor people. Often this is done with little or no thought about its

[18] Harper, *Urban Churches Vital Signs*, 298.

unintended consequences. It may be done without any intention of becoming involved with the people for whom the aid is intended. Sometimes charity is given as a means of intentionally avoiding involvement with people who are different from one's own group of friends and acquaintances.

To have a vital Christian witness, the church of the future must go beyond acts of charity. It must go beyond the need to feel good about giving. The church of the future ought to seek active partnerships between oppressed people seeking to change the conditions of injustice and other people who are willing to join in a common effort so that equity can be established. The most important gift that the church of the future can give is the creation of relationships within which people of different backgrounds can learn to trust, respect, and work together. The creation of such a community is the foundation for the redevelopment of urban churches and their neighborhoods. The enormous challenges of urban neighborhoods belong to all the people in the whole city. Bringing people together from different sectors of the city, partnering for redevelopment, and collaborating for justice—that is the calling of Christians; that is the church of the future in action; that is the business of faith. Such a calling moves people beyond charity toward greater commitment, wider vision, and more systematic action for justice.

Changing policies, structures, and behaviors that are at the root of injustice is the focus of systematic justice. Efforts to change the large-scale systems that have great influence on the lives of persons and groups involve the conscious use of political and economic power. The emphasis is on distributive equity, and the empowering of groups of people to take charge of their own lives. At this level, consciousness shifts from being a victim to becoming a participant in shaping society in a more humane fashion. In the

religious frame of reference, love operating as justice at the societal level helps to unveil the pretensions and social fictions by which injustice is maintained. It can be the motivating spirit that enables new and more just structures to be created and put into operation. Justice is understood to move beyond the purely personal realm into the institutional realm where people power can be mobilized over against entrenched institutional power.

Social justice focuses on basic causes of oppression, inequity, and disenfranchisement. It seeks to change public policy and public priorities. Its words empower people to take the initiative in ways that are positive and constructive. The movement for systematic justice understands that oppressed people have strengths, skills, cultural assets, and the responsibility to act corporately for their own common good. It works for long-term goals and more permanent solutions that create more just social arrangements. Systematic justice by its nature involves political action, mobilizing voting power, creating common interest alliances, and building cooperative coalitions. This is already happening in parts of the country and is part of the paradigm for the church of the future.

The limitations of working for systematic justice are many in number. Justice work takes time. It seeks large-scale goals, which do not come quickly. It does not deal directly with immediate, urgent needs. It involves risk-taking, and the investment of large amounts of human and financial resources. It involves political processes and almost always involves conflict and stress in the community. It deals with institutional power that is located outside the neighborhood and not easily subject to direct citizen influence. It often fails to deliver. Nevertheless, the work of seeking justice—the

business of faith—is necessary to create a democratic society that works for the good of all people.

From my experience in visiting urban churches in major cities and conducting research, the contemporary understanding of justice that has emerged is the concept of equity.[19] Equity, as it is embodied in the work of these urban churches, has a broad meaning that includes shareholding, fairness, and community. Equity means being a shareholder in the common good with a fair distribution of goods and services within the bonds of mutual responsibility for the larger community. The experience of people in urban churches working together with others from the neighborhood and with institutions beyond the local area have often produced a community within which there is a strong sense of equity.[20] This positive experience is a life-affirming, motivating spirit that is at the heart of the church of the future. It is a significant part of the good news to be shared and celebrated.

[19] The research for this paper was conducted from May 2005 through April 2010 through visits to forty-two churches in California, Pennsylvania, New York, Illinois, Texas, and Arizona trough surveys, interviews, and observations of churches and church leadership.

[20] Harper, *Urban Churches Vital Signs*, 304.

CHAPTER 6

STRATEGIES FOR RENEWAL, GROWTH, AND TRANSFORMATION WITHIN THE CHURCH AND THE COMMUNITY

The Church of the Future: Strategies for Renewal

The special strengths of the church of the future that can be renewed are numerous. They may include: a positive turning away from a sense of dependence and disengagement toward affirmation of religious inner strength; identification of indigenous assets; local leadership; social cohesion through faith-based community; a new sense of empowerment; trust in the staying power of the church for the long-term; increased capacity for new partnerships; a deeper sense of human dignity and self-worth; a renewed practice of caring for one's neighbor; and confidence for shaping the future in a way that is more just and life-affirming. All of these are sign of the business of faith. Economic development ministries within the faith-based community have the opportunities to rebuild the blight that causes the degradation and hopelessness in the community. The church of the future is that component that can really build communities into the havens of hope and possibility. By building and owning schools, credit unions, franchises, and housing units, these churches are transforming their communities into a livable state. Church involvement is so essential to the future of community economic development

that it cannot be overemphasized. In neighborhoods marked by disinvestment, human and financial capital abandonment, and governmental neglect, the church of the future is frequently the only institution remaining that calls with a constructive voice. Equally important, it is an institution with a constituency and with a community presence, impact, and mission. It is the choice of the present and it is the spirit of the future.

As important as all church involvement has been and will continue to be, the social, moral, economic, and other inherent connections of churches to their own communities cannot be paralleled. More and more ministers today are recognizing that they cannot address the spiritual needs of their congregations without addressing their material and physical needs. They also realize that while church-based social services have played a key role in meeting the community's needs, it has done very little to empower those communities to actively participate in the shaping of their own community agendas. As they come to this recognition, community economic development is becoming a groundswell, a voice heard more frequently and more loudly.

As the church of the future continues its community economic development journey, the need for collaborating and partnerships will become more important and vital to the success of fulfilling the church's mission of a holistic ministry. Periodicals on economic development in the faith-based community make clear that there are churches that are doing no better than the secular world is doing in building buildings, but they are not building communities.[1] As the Church transforms into the community that God wants it to be, there must be more partnerships by churches if the goal is to address the whole person. For instance, if a church on one end of the block has a successful senior housing

[1] Harper, *Urban Churches Vital Signs*, 297-306.

project, the church down the street should not try to build senior housing, but partner with the church to envision a senior housing project that will be beneficial for the community. As churches partner in areas in economic development, there will be more funds available to have diverse ministries as it relates to economic development.

Social Entrepreneurship and the Context of Community Development

In developing a framework for theological entrepreneurship, a discussion on social entrepreneurialism must be had as it relates to the context of community development. "Social entrepreneurship" is one of the most misunderstood phrases in the non-profit sector today. Everybody, it seems, has a different definition of what it means. The concept of social entrepreneurship was first introduced internationally in the 1960s and 1970s.[2] It was further developed and enhanced during the next two decades through the creation of stronger linkages between profit-making tools and social-related causes. As a result, it led to the adoption of a more creative, innovative approach to social work and a redefining of the meaning of the term to encourage a more financially sustainable outlook. This was the drive to enhance public-private partnerships in a more proactive way, which works to improve the quality of life throughout society. The concept of social entrepreneurialism is therefore built on the basis of tackling social issues and challenges through creative, innovative tools and approaches that inevitably lead to sustainable socio-economic development.

Social entrepreneurship is happening globally. Innovative approaches to social issues are occurring on a daily basis worldwide. Being entrepreneurial about social

[2] David Bornstein. *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas*, rev. ed. (Huntington Beach, CA: Oxford University Press, 2007), 32-33

issues can be accomplished in a variety of ways. The most obvious one is to run a not-for-profit organization in innovative ways that creates funding for the organization's programs or create employment opportunities for its clients.

The concept of entrepreneurship, long hallowed in the context of business and economic ventures, has been increasingly applied to the context of social problem-solving.[3] The challenges of finding effective and sustainable solutions to many social problems are substantial, and solutions may require many of the ingredients associated with successful innovation in business creation. However, solutions to social problems—such as sustainable alleviation of the constellation of health, education, economic, political, and cultural problems associated with long-term poverty—often demand fundamental transformations in the political, economic, and social systems that underpin current stable states. The test of successful business entrepreneurship is the creation of a viable and growing business, often embodied in the survival and expansion of a business organization. The test of "social" entrepreneurship, in contrast, may be a change in the social dynamics and systems that created and maintained the problem; the organization created to solve the problem may get smaller or less viable as it succeeds.

While the concept of social entrepreneurship is relatively new, initiatives that employ entrepreneurial capacities to solve social problems are not. The authors of the paper, *Social Entrepreneurship: Leadership that Facilitates Societal Transformation*, found a variety of initiatives—particularly focused on the problems of poor and marginalized populations—that have transformed the lives of thousands of people around

[3] Sarah H. Alvord, L. David Brown, and Christine W. Letts, *Social Entrepreneurship: Leadership that Facilitates Societal Transformation – An Exploratory Study* (Boston: Center for Public Leadership, 2003), 135-58.

the world.[4] As in other areas of social action, the practice of social entrepreneurship may be well ahead of the theory. This paper will focus on social entrepreneurship that leads to significant changes in the social, political, and economic contexts for poor and marginalized groups—in other words, social entrepreneurship that leads to social transformation.

First, different perspectives on social entrepreneurship in the context of community development must be described. Some authors have focused on social entrepreneurship as combining commercial enterprises with social impacts. In this perspective, entrepreneurs have used business skills and knowledge to create enterprises that accomplish social purposes, in addition to being commercially viable.[5] Not-for-profit organizations may create commercial subsidiaries and use them to generate employment or revenue that serves their social purposes; for-profit organizations may donate some of their profits or organize their activities to serve social goals. These initiatives use resources generated from successful commercial activities to advance and sustain their social activities.

Others have emphasized social entrepreneurship as innovating for social impact. In this perspective, attention is focused on innovations and social arrangements that have consequences for social problems, often with relatively little attention to economic viability by ordinary business criteria. Social entrepreneurs are focused on social problems. They create innovative initiatives, build new social arrangements, and

[4] Alvord, Brown, and Letts, *Social Entrepreneurship*, 135-58.

[5] Ibid., 143.

mobilize resources in response to those problems, rather than in response to the dictates of the market or commercial criteria.

Still others see social entrepreneurship as a way to catalyze social transformation well beyond the solutions of the social problems that are the initial focus of concern. From this perspective, social entrepreneurship at its best produces small changes in the short term that reverberate through existing systems to catalyze large changes in the longer term.[6] Social entrepreneurs in this tradition need to understand not only immediate problems but also the larger social system and its interdependencies; this understanding allows for the introduction of new paradigms at critical leverage points that can lead to cascades of mutually reinforcing changes that create and sustain transformed social arrangements. Sustainable social transformations include both the innovations for social impacts and the concern for ongoing streams of resources that characterize the other two perspectives on social entrepreneurship. They also lead to major shifts in the social context within which the original problem is embedded and sustained.

While all three approaches to social entrepreneurship have considerable utility, this discussion will focus on the perspective that emphasizes social entrepreneurship as a catalyst for social transformation. More specifically, this study focuses on social entrepreneurship that creates innovative solutions to immediate social problems and also mobilizes the ideas, capacities, resources, and social arrangements required for long-term, sustainable, social transformations. In the same spirit, the church of the future takes on

[6] Alvord, Brown, and Letts, *Social Entrepreneurship*, 139.

the role of a theological entrepreneur in transforming lives and communities, which is the business of faith.

Trends in the Church of the Future

A small cloud is on the horizon. The winds of change are beginning to gather strength and with certainty a storm is coming. Change is coming. All over the U.S. there is a quiet movement of the Spirit of God that is causing believers to reexamine how they "do church." Churches are throwing out the old measures of success. It is no longer merely about size, seeker sensitivity, spiritual gifts, church health, nor the number of small groups. It is about making a significant and sustainable difference in the lives of people—in communities and in cities. There is a growing awareness that churches cannot continue to do the same old things and expect a different result. If churches want to be the salt and light as the Church was created to be, they have to do something different and they have to be something different. Community transformation is not found in programs, strategies, campaigns or tactics. For most people, it will take nothing less than a shift of seismic proportions in what the Church is to be in the third millennium. A paradigm is a model consisting of shared assumptions regarding what works or what is true. A paradigm shift is that "aha!" moment when one sees things in such a new light that one can never go back to the old ways again. Each paradigm shift takes a person from a model of thinking that he or she must discard to a new model that he or she must embrace. A new paradigm is the new wineskins that will be needed to hold the new assumptions about what is true. According to Eric Swanson of the

Leadership Network, believers need to change ten paradigms of how they currently view church in order to maximize the impact of local churches on their communities:

1. From building walls to building bridges
2. From measuring attendance to measuring impact
3. From encouraging saints to attend the service to equipping the saints for works of service
4. From Serve US to Service—from inward to outward focus
5. From duplication of human services and ministries to partnering with existing services and ministries
6. From fellowship to functional unity
7. From condemning the city to blessing the city and praying for it
8. From being a minister in a congregation to being a minister in a parish
9. From anecdote and speculation to valid information
10. From teacher to learner.[7]

Beyond Swanson's paradigm shifts, believers who wish to embrace the church of the future also must identify the difficulties that may be encountered. In my research, I have personally encountered the following six obstacles: 1) unwillingness to try new approaches designed to involve new groups of people, and resistance to becoming more inclusive; 2) resistance to changing worship patterns, especially music, and reluctance to accept a more participatory style; 3) anxiety about survival and reluctance to think beyond internal problems of leadership, membership, and finance; 4) lack of vision, and the inability to see a larger picture of potential opportunity beyond immediate circumstances; 5) holding onto worn-out traditions, inability to let go of past history, and unrealistic expectations; and 6) neglect of worship and the spiritual life, as well as a focus on nurturing members in favor of engagement with external mission. Clearly, the revitalization of the Church is a struggle that requires overcoming formidable barriers, persistence over a long period of time, and vision to see beyond the immediate short-term

[7] Eric Swanson, *Ten Paradigm Shifts toward Community Transformation* (Dallas: Leadership Network, 2003).

issues. It takes courage to act with positive expectations and the ability to find or create new resources.

This dissertation, which envisions the church of the future, depends on vigorous religious groups doing their part to heal, reconcile, nurture, guide, discipline, and inspire individuals to join in authentic community. Churches can accomplish this goal in ways that differ from any other sector of civil society. Churches must incorporate the logic that sustainable, good communities are built "one person at a time, from the inside out," as argued by Boston University economist Glenn Loury.[8]

But churches are not as ready as they should be to meet the challenges ahead. All faith communities will have a role in the renewal of civil society, but the church of the future plays a unique role. Since the symptoms of poverty are concentrated in urban communities where the church of the future is located, the most promising solutions will emerge within their boundaries. However, churches and other change agents will need the assistance of outside partners and supporters to alleviate poverty in the long term.

The renewal of the urban church depends on a reckoning with the significant demographic, political, and cultural changes that have occurred in Black communities since the Civil Rights Movement. Healing will come only after the illness has been admitted. The church of the future must ask the surrounding community for a report card on past stewardship efforts. The church of the future must accept the harsh criticisms and challenging suggestions, and even the outright rejection that some community members may express. This self-assessment will constitute part of the long and painful process of

[8] Glenn Lowry, *One by One from the Inside Out* (New York: Freedom Press, 1995), 154.

healing and empowerment that urban churches must undergo as they retool and re-engineer for this next century.

The church of the future must listen to the indictments of their sincerity, relevance, and commitment, not in a defensive posture, but with humility and humor to admit willingly that they have been part of the problem for far too long. Congregations are often not taken seriously as change agents in their communities because they appear to be on the sidelines, avoiding the messiness of community politics and power dynamics. During the process of renewal, the church of the future must explore how it can serve as a voice for social righteousness without entangling itself excessively in partisan politics or, at the other extreme, maintaining its lack of involvement.

Seminaries have a role to play as trends are developed for the church of the future. Seminaries are needed to build the churches' capacity to engage in comprehensive community development. Professors of social ethics, church and society, practical theology, and field education may be natural resources for initiating this work. However, they must be in conversation and partnership with colleagues in biblical, historical, and systematic theological studies to ensure that the Church's ministry evolves in dialectical relationship to Christian tradition and to contemporary realities. Seminaries should contact community development professionals in their areas to explore possibilities for training clergy in assessing community needs and for mobilizing congregational resources on behalf of the poor. There are several national organizations that could serve as useful resources, including the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions, and the Local Initiative Support Corporation.

The call to action has sounded. Government agencies are calling for partners in social service delivery; nonprofit agencies are calling for greater collaboration among community-based organizations; the neediest individuals and families are calling for training assistance and care. People of faith now have an opportunity to answer the call, to become agents of community building and development. This paper has attempted to offer vision and practical resources to help the urban church achieve a more vigorous public witness. It is an exciting time to remember the words of a former professor: "The world is equally balanced between good and evil; your next act will tip the scale."[9]

Building the Adaptive Model of the Church of the Future

Nazarene Theological Seminary's president Ron Benefiel (former pastor of Los Angeles First Church of the Nazarene and founder of Bresee Institute for Urban Training) has noted, "The need and opportunity for the Church to minister in the city is evident. The challenge is certainly there before us. The question is whether or not we will respond by taking the good news of the Gospel into our cities."[10] Today in the midst of a weakened and globalized economy, all share the challenges, opportunities, and questions that are facing the nation as a whole. Communities struggle with problems of immigration, inadequate healthcare, and economic crises. Home foreclosures are at an all-time high. So it is that when I survey the ecclesiastical landscape of my own context of ministry, I see the same challenges that face congregations from coast to coast as the church of the future struggles to make sense of its context. We live in the midst of

[9] Garth Baker Fletcher, lecture for the class, "Social Ethics," Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, California, January 1997.

[10] Ron Benefiel, *Urban Imperative* video, Kansas City, Missouri: Mission Strategy USA/Canada, 2004.

massive cultural shifts brought about by globalization, rapidly changing communication and information technology, consumerism, the increasing gap between the rich and the poor with a shrinking middle class, and unprecedented threats to the entire biosphere due to war, pollution, disease, poverty, and disasters related to global climate change. Linked to these tectonic shifts is the fact that Christendom—the marriage of the Church with secular power—is all but over. The U.S. is post-denominational and post-Christendom. Believers no longer enjoy the privileges of Christendom, but they have the opportunity to become a prophetic people once again. From the margins believers will experience new opportunities and challenges in making disciples as they develop and define the church of the future.

The biggest challenge to the Church today is to recover its identity so that congregations understand and embrace their holistic vocation in ministry. This identity is the end point of this paper's discussion. The church of the future is a hybrid of the missional church and the liberation experience of the African-American Church. In today's rapidly changing world, the old style of leadership is not working. Those individuals and organizations that are making a difference are practicing theological entrepreneurship. In their book, *Entrepreneurial Faith*, Kirbyjon Caldwell and Walt Kallestad discuss four driving forces that should distinguish ministries to respond to need in new and creative ways; together they are called "theological entrepreneurship."[11] The authors note that these forces can guide an effective theological entrepreneurial process and therefore lead to the development of an adaptive model of the church of the future. The four driving forces are:

[11] Kirbyjon Caldwell and Walt Kallestad, *Entrepreneurial Faith* (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press, 2004), 79-80.

1) The church of the future is opportunity driven. For an idea or opportunity to warrant action, it must be something the people want or need.
2) The church of the future is driven by a lead entrepreneur and a team. There must be someone who will take the risk to lead the church of the future. We have learned from the failures of the past that one person cannot lead a church to healthy growth. It takes an entrepreneurial team to break through the ceiling of growth. One entrepreneur can start a wonderful thing but a team of theological entrepreneurs can expand the dream into a powerful mission where the business of faith can be achieved.
3) The church of the future is driven by creativity and fiscally responsible. Theological entrepreneurs spend imagination before they spend money. They note that imagination goes far in producing results with very little resources.
4) The church of the future is dependent on the fit and balance among the previous driving forces just mentioned.[12]

These driving forces are grounded in churches that fit the description of an entrepreneur. The church of the future must be committed to innovating, seizing new opportunities, and leading others to maximize the opportunities that are presented. But most of all, the model church of the future is one that is submitted to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and inspired by this Holy Spirit to seize opportunities, to radically preach and live the gospel every day, and to develop innovative approaches to meet the needs of people around it. Like the apostle Paul, an effective church of the future draws upon the imagination, innovation, commitment, passion, tenacity, teamwork, and vision of its leader and leadership team to fulfill the dream of being all the God wants it to be.

In light of this fresh wind of innovative change initiated by the Holy Spirit, churches—both new and old—need to step forward to launch new ministries and mission-motivated enterprises that bridge the gospel, the holistic good news of Jesus Christ to the community. This in fact is being done in many places around the country. These churches are making a difference by not being content where they are but participating in this new activity that God is doing today. These ministries are in tune to the Holy Spirit through their

[12] Caldwell and Kallestad, *Entrepreneurial Faith*, 80.

contemplation and action. In the context of the church of the future, entrepreneurs are good listeners, both to the culture around them and to the Holy Spirit. One cannot do the business of faith if one does not know the culture, cannot speak the language of one's neighbors, and will not discern what the Spirit is saying to the church.

Engaging Three Critical Areas

In order to retrieve an identity and become a church of contemplation and action, three critical areas must be engaged, which in turn contribute to the development of the adaptive model of the church of the future. The first area that must be dealt with is the elephant in the room: physical church buildings. There exists a deeply ingrained belief that a church is a building where Christians gather for religious programs and activities. Related to this erroneous belief is the conviction, especially among mainline Christians, that a congregation is not fully established until it owns a building identified as "the church." The belief that a church is a big building with pews, programs, and professional clergy who carry out the ministry has led to an "attractional" model of ministry in which evangelism is understood to be a process of attracting "unchurched" people to come to the building called "church." Once at "church," they will hear music and the preached word that will attract them to Christ. Once they are "churched" (regular attendees at the church building), they will financially support the programs, clergy, and building called "church."

There are many theological problems with the building-centered, attractional model, beyond its ineffectiveness in taking the gospel to the masses. One problem is that the Bible teaches that the church is organic. The Body of Christ, the people of God who are created, called, gifted, and sent out in partnership with God in God's mission to the world. The message is clear: the *ecclesia* is a God-gathered people, not a building, and its identity is

rooted in God's redemptive, healing mission. "Churching" people does not necessarily make disciples of them. Sometimes "churching" inoculates them against real discipleship, with its costly demands and rigorous expectations.

The word "mission" means "sent out." The entrepreneurial church must return to the biblical understanding of church as the people of God in mission to the world. There will be a de-emphasis on owning and maintaining expensive buildings, and a new emphasis on Christians mobilizing for worship and service in the community in which it serves. The use of borrowed space for worship will increasingly be seen as a responsible, God-honoring practice. The former practice of building massive edifices to house worship for thousands of church attendees will come to be seen as theologically misinformed. Instead there will be a turn to a "tabernacle" theology in which God's people are on the move in mission, thus in need of flexible, fluid ministry space. The very space in which worship and teaching take place will reflect theological entrepreneurship.

The second area that must be dealt with is the way believers look at stewardship. In light of doing holistic ministry, the question of finances and budget always comes up. As the church of the future looks at its ministry budget, it will increasingly find ways to maximize its financial resources for mission. Some congregations may choose to convert their large, urban church buildings into mission centers with seven-day-a-week holistic ministries that meet the needs of the people in the community. The stewardship of money must be taught and practiced within a context of stewardship of God's creation, including a deep commitment to heal the environmental wounds that are a consequence of rampant consumerism. Whereas in the twentieth century evangelism was overwhelmingly separated from social justice ministry, in the church of the future these two will reunite so that the good news of salvation is proclaimed holistically. Disciple-making will therefore include both

spiritual formation and justice formation, and these will have a central place in the church budget.

The third area that must be dealt with is the way believers nurture and develop partnerships. The church of the future will increasingly be marked by hybridity in the mutual work between church, academy, and mission. In order for the church to remain viable, it must become much more focused on leadership development for God's mission rather than on institutional survival. This will be done in tandem with seminaries, parachurch organizations, and public/private ventures. Similarly, theological seminaries that survive and thrive will do so because they are much more fully in partnership with healthy holistic churches as an integral part of their programs. The use of decentralized, contextualized learning environments outside of the seminary will be critically important.

Expanding the Vision

As the church of the future prepares to engage in prophetic urban ministry, it is also important to note that having a big vision for ministry in the community that goes well beyond traditional patterns will help attract new members to the church. It should also be noted that strong lay leadership (cultivated by the pastor) is important. This lay leadership provides the human resources for many of the diverse enterprises of the church. In addition, the church of the future values incarnational theology—that is, embodiment of the gospel—through service and systematic justice that will enable the prophetic urban church to bring great spiritual strength to its ministries. There needs to be a freshness and legitimacy of the Holy Spirit. There are some churches that build housing, build schools, and create jobs, but to be faith-based means that the Holy Spirit of

God must be permeating and transforming lives in the process so that others can be saved personally, spiritually, and socially.

The current landscape rewards church activity, and such activity can take place without any reference to the church's impact beyond itself. Since it is a fundamental truism of human nature that "what gets rewarded gets done," it makes sense that the current landscape promotes the internally focused, program-based side of the ledger. The church of the future must develop a landscape the supports the other side: externally focused ministry, people development efforts, and a kingdom-oriented leadership agenda. This new landscape, more dimensional than the current one, will highlight new behaviors that will support and accelerate the rise of the church of the future.

We are privileged to be alive at a critical juncture in the history of the Christian movement in North America. The choices we make will influence the expression of the Church for generations to come. In his book, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church*, Reggie McNeal highlights significant decisions that some churches are making.[13] A church in South Los Angeles decides that its next ministry chapter should be about building a better community, not building a better church. "No child will go hungry in the community," the pastor declares in his "vision" message, a time usually reserved for launching new church initiatives. A church in Michigan passes up the option to purchase a prime piece of real estate that would allow it to build a facility to house its multisite congregation. Instead, it votes not to spend 450 million on church facilities but to invest the money in community projects. Another group of churches is collaborating

[13] Reggie McNeal, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 110-11.

on brining drinkable water to villages in the developing and undeveloped nations of the world.

New expressions of church are emerging as well. McNeal writes of a church planter who left an established church to start one of his own has decided to set up a network of faith communities to serve as the organic church in every sector of his city.[14] Another entrepreneurial spiritual leader, reports McNeal, has opened up a community center with a church tucked inside of it. He has a dozen other ministries operating in the shared space.[15]

The entrepreneurial renaissance is changing the ways in which the people of God think about God and the world, about what God is up to in the world, and about what part the people of God play in it. We are learning to see things differently, and once we adjust our ways of seeing, we will never be able to look at these things the way we used to. Today's elevated levels of education, heightened technology, and increased wealth have combined to create a huge pool of talented activists and sponsors. A growing number of people are willing and able to engage social issues with new solutions and the power to make a difference. The combination of wealth, talent, and creativity is resulting in ideas and practices that are both disruptive and hopeful for the Church. New ways of doing church are being born every day. There is no putting this Humpty Dumpty back together. That is the good news. Church will never be the same.

The Church must find balance in its internal and external focus. Chapter 1 commented on the foundation for what this paper means by the church of the future as a

[14] McNeal, *Missional Renaissance*, 114.

[15] Ibid., 14.

hybrid between the liberation theology of the African-American Church and the theology of the missional church. In order to be effective, a church must engage those within the church as well as those in the community. This is the essence of holistic ministry. It responds to every dimension of human need. God loves not only our spirits but our whole selves. Ministering to a person's material needs is one way of communicating God's love. And leading someone to a right relationship with God has a profound effect on a person's psychological, physical, social, and economic well-being as well.

There is a need for internally focused ministries to nurture, develop, and train people for external ministry. The Church cannot share the gospel unless it understands what it means to be a Christian; this takes place through discipleship. Further, discipleship is the process of growing to spiritual maturity, becoming a disciple. God does not want believers to remain spiritual babies. God wants all believers to grow up. Growth happens by knowing God's word, by trusting God's wisdom, by obeying God's commands, and by developing God's character. The internally focused ministry of the Church is, as Paul notes in Ephesians 4: 12, to equip God's people to do his work. This is the responsibility of the leadership team toward the members of the church, but one key dimension of this responsibility is to lead them into their vocation.

Another characteristic of the church of the future is an emphasis on the development of people over programs. Program-driven churches and ministry organizations operate on suspect but often unchallenged assumptions. These assumptions are that people will be better off if they participate in certain activities that the church or organization has sanctioned for its ministry agenda. The problem is that study after study continues to reveal that active church members do not reflect a different value set than

the culture at large. In addition, they are beset by the same lifestyle ills of nonparticipants. They wonder, "Where is the abundant life that was promised if we only participated more?" The answer is that achieving abundant life will require intentional personal development. This is not given in the program-driven modality of operation; the only real guarantee is that the church will keep people busy.

The church of the future takes far more seriously the challenge to help people shape their paths for personal development. Some of the key ideas that will be explored related to making this shift will challenge prevailing notions of how people grow that have shaped program-driven churches. Churches must change their ideas of what it means to develop disciples. Discipleship should include a balance between, first, studying Jesus and all things spiritual in an environment protected from the world, and second, following Jesus into the world to join him in his redemptive mission. Churches need to expand the bandwidth of issues they address in helping people grow, realizing that spiritual growth is impossible apart from relationship health and other life factors.

Another reason this balancing act will prove difficult is that church leaders are not prepared to develop people. Typical clergy training efforts, including Bible colleges, seminaries, and denominational and parachurch ministries, prepare church leaders to teach the Bible, manage the church, and grow the business. The typical clergyperson is groomed to do project management and perform religious rites, not develop people. And if the truth be known, many leaders do not give themselves to developing other people because they have never experienced it themselves. Leaders will have to travel a steep unlearning curve to move away from the activities and behaviors that support the program-driven model.

The balance of internal and external ministries also means that church membership or some level of involvement in a local congregation will no longer be the primary spiritual expression of followers of Jesus. Entrepreneurial Christians will no longer be content to help their church succeed in getting better at "doing church" or consider their commitment to the church as an expression of their spiritual depth. They are balancing their commitments to people and causes beyond the church. They also no longer look to or rely on the clergy and church leaders to script or dictate their spiritual and personal development. The Church has to recalibrate its ministry efforts to champion this new reality.

Another characteristic that looms important in building the adaptive-model entrepreneurial church is the focus on leadership that looks beyond the church to fulfilling the kingdom of God. The spirituality the world needs must be robust enough to engage people where they live, work, and play. An active worship experience should be at work in all of these contexts. This kingdom movement requires spiritual leaders who understand the culture's search for God and who are willing to engage in this discussion. These leaders do not insist or depend on people's leaving their own turf behind to have this conversation. They do not need the props of religious authority or church real estate to pursue their passion of introducing people to the revelation of God's heart for the world through Jesus. Their agenda differs significantly from those leaders who see their major task as serving people who come to church.

Much of the kingdom agenda is focused outside the "organized" Church, exercising its influence in the world beyond the Church by bringing "church" into every domain of the culture. This does not mean that leaders cannot serve in the institutional

Church. But it does mean that if they do fill a traditional church role, they conduct it with an entrepreneurial agenda. The content and character of their leadership will be very different from others who hold similar positions but view their responsibilities through a church-based mindset.

Entrepreneurial leaders are thinking differently about what church could be and even should be. For these leaders, church includes embracing the internal that empowers them to be externally focused, from primarily concentrating on its institutional maintenance to developing an incarnational influence. These leaders find themselves becoming innovative and using information technology to take their churches to the next level in service. These innovators are imagining the local church as a catalyst to mobilize all the community (internally and externally), synergizing the altruistic impetus, to work on the big things that God cares about. Their agenda stands in stark contrast to the program-driven church of the modern era. Their devotion to God is lived out in their determination to bless and to develop people who are made in God's image.

The leadership shift will call many present church leaders whose lips profess that they want to be entrepreneurial but do not have it in their hearts. Leaders will not only have to see their roles differently; they will also have to demonstrate in their lives what it is they want people to do. This may require that they acquire new competencies for an assignment that is quite different from the current leadership training models in place for readying clergy to lead churches. These leaders will also have to answer the question of the proper role of clergy in an entrepreneurial church.

The church of the future is not about "doing church" better—at least, not the way believers have done church across the years. It is not church growth with a new dress. It

is not adding a smoke machine for the worship center or hiring a new band. Although the entrepreneurial church is about renewal, it is not the renewal which generally means trying to find some new way to revitalize the troops to do church better with the hope of adding more members in the end. The entrepreneurial church is not a fad, the next big thing. Entrepreneurial thinking and living change the game completely. The entrepreneurial renaissance is altering both the character and the expression of the local church in the world.

The entrepreneurial renaissance reflects the Church's response in a time of remarkable manifestation of the kingdom. Those who miss it will find themselves on the other side of a divide that renders them irrelevant to the movement of God in the world. Those who engage it will find themselves at the intersection of God's redemptive mission and the world he loves so much he was willing to die for it.

In becoming the church of the future, there are eight factors that need to be in place in carrying out the mission of community development and justice. These eight internal factors are: 1) the centrality of worship—strong preaching, appropriate music, and interaction of members; 2) strong Christian education—positive programs for adults, families, and children; 3) community building—creating a network of positive relationships and effective partnerships; 4) holistic approach to ministry—integrating personal and social mission in supporting community; 5) pastoral leadership—vision, goal setting, spiritual motivation, and skilled organizing; 6) becoming proactive; 7) taking initiative; and 8) reconfiguration of church building space for new uses. Once the internal factors are addressed, then the external factors can be addressed to developing the church of the future. There are six external factors, including: 1) identifying

indigenous leadership—connecting with and involving new leaders; 2) asset-based development—seeing the potential in land, people, buildings, and local culture; 3) forming partnerships—linking with groups, donors, foundations, government, and other churches; 4) creating new income-producing enterprises; 5) developing community culture—affirming, celebrating, promoting, and creating events and local symbols; and 6) community redevelopment—empowering people to rebuild neighborhoods, both physically and socially.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this dissertation is to argue for a new yet old approach to "doing" church. Throughout this paper, entrepreneurial principles were introduced to engage the Church in becoming the "Church of the future" by enlisting communities—both internally and externally—to reach their full potential and obey God's calling. Doing church the same old way will only bring about the same old results. In order to affect communities for the better, the Church is going to have to step out of the traditional mold. New wine calls for new wineskins.

There is a revolution taking place and it needs to continue in America. This revolution was not launched by outside forces, but from within the hearts of men and women who will no longer settle for what has always been. This is a story of the entrepreneurial revolution, a sweeping force that is changing the landscape of the business of faith, individual lifestyles, family relationships, and the Church.

Any individual, any group, and any church or organization can do something big for God as they get involved in what God is doing. Theological entrepreneurship connects the individual's Monday-through-Friday life with practical outreach that meets human needs with the grace of God. It taps into the passion and expertise of the businessperson and the professional, the layperson and the pastor, and even the behind-the-scenes people who quietly want to utilize their skills, knowledge, and abilities to help expand God's Kingdom.

In order to transition into an entrepreneurial Church, each leader and every member needs to develop a personal entrepreneurial faith. This will not be easy. It will

require people who are willing to move out of the traditional flow and, at times, paddle against the current. Many churches and the communities of which they are a part are paralyzed. If the Church is to see the paralyzed in its communities walk again, it must become entrepreneurial. As times become more challenging, many churches as we know them today will fade away. Churches that refuse to become entrepreneurial by reaching beyond the four walls of the church with the gospel will soon fade away.

The bitter falling-out between fundamentalists and followers of the so-called "social gospel" early in the twentieth century has affected the Church to this day. One branch claims that nothing is as important as leading individuals to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. The other side stresses that the calling of Christians is to care for those who are poor and to seek justice. Both sides have it partly right, but neither has the whole picture.

The church of the future overcomes this long-standing divide by reaching out with the whole gospel in both word and deed. Entrepreneurial Christians love not only "in word or speech, but [also] in truth and action" (1 Jn 3:18). The coordinator of evangelism and outreach at Germantown Church of the Brethren in Philadelphia sums up this idea: "Love is an action word. People want to see action, not hear so much mouth. You can't tell somebody about the love of Jesus Christ if you don't have the love in your heart. The love is what draws people to Christ." Without social ministry, evangelism can be perceived as just "so much mouth." Without sharing the gospel, social activism is stripped of the Holy Spirit's transforming power.

Churches that engage in entrepreneurial faith make a difference, both "here and now" in their communities and in the eternal kingdom to come. The root meaning of the

word "holistic" is "whole," from the Greek *holos.* The world is broken and incomplete, falling far short of the glory God intended at the dawn of creation. As Christ is making people whole—both as individuals and as Jesus' new kingdom community—God's Spirit works through them to bring wholeness to others.

The motto for the church of the future can be summed up as "reaching the community with the whole gospel for the whole person through whole churches." The "whole gospel" brings salvation in its fullest sense—forgiveness of sins, inner conversion of individuals in regeneration and sanctification, physical well-being, the transformation of social and economic relationships, the renewal of communities, and the ultimate triumph of Christ over the forces of evil on a cosmic scale. Living out this gospel in the local church will involve modeling God's concern for the total well-being of persons and communities. It means an incarnational lifestyle of integrity, compassion, and invitation. It means loving neighbors both far and near with the same joyous abandon that Jesus displayed, especially those who are most needy and least lovable.

It is common practice to want to break God's work down into smaller chunks that are easier to understand and to manage. Thus the Church's presentation of the gospel has been fractured. Different segments of the Church have emphasized different aspects of the good news—i.e., forgiveness, social justice, healing, regeneration—and some have claimed to possess the only true meaning of the gospel. But God's glorious work of redemption in Christ accomplishes "far more than all we can ask or imagine" (Eph. 3:20). If one's understanding of the gospel is too narrow, the ways that God can use his people in his kingdom become limited.

The church of the future serves "the whole person," viewing individuals through God's eyes as body-soul whole persons created to live in wholesome community. Thus the Church ministers to every dimension of human need, and seeks wholeness at every social level—individuals, families, communities, nations, and the global human family. The church of the future values every person as a unique and marvelous creation, destined for eternity. Because of the Spirit's power to make all things new, a transformational perspective sees persons in terms of their potential rather than their problems.

The church of the future also breaks down the barriers between those serving and those being served. Each person has contributed to the pain and suffering and decay in the world. Believers thus serve with a posture of gratitude and humility, acknowledging their own brokenness before the cross. Christians recognize that ministering Christ's wholeness to others is part of what makes them whole.

Ministry within the church of the future occurs through "whole churches," or holistic congregations, where disciples of Christ live out their salvation in loving fellowship. While each believer is called to individual acts of compassion and witness, the corporate expression of mission is indispensable. The whole church is to pull together toward a unifying ministry vision, drawing on the unique gifts of every member. Building a healthy church and developing dynamic outreach are not conflicting priorities because when a church is functioning rightly as the body of Christ, it will also serve as the hands and feet of Christ in the world.

Because the Church plays a key role in God's redemptive plan, the goal of the church of the future is not only to bring persons to Christ but to welcome them into a

congregation of his followers. Parachurch ministries fill an important role, but they cannot substitute for a worshiping, discipling congregation. Holistic churches welcome those who are served through ministries of evangelism and social action with open arms.

Every church is called to entrepreneurial ministry, that is, to reach communities with the whole gospel for the whole person through whole churches. This calling makes believers bold in sharing God's glorious salvation through word and deed. Through this entrepreneurial ministry, Christians respond to the world's brokenness by proclaiming the joy of a right relationship with God in Christ, participating in the Spirit's ongoing work of personal and social restoration, and providing a foretaste of the coming of God's kingdom in its fullness.

Jesus told his followers, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (Jn 20:21). As the Father desires that all should have abundant life, believers should also help others realize their potential for living as God intended. As the Father urges that "justice roll down like waters" (Amos 5:24), Christians too must work toward creating the kind of society that pleases God. As the Creator of all takes delight in his work and promises to renew the earth, Christians too should serve as responsible, creative stewards over the earth's resources. As God incarnate in Christ appealed to all to receive the Good News, so should churches, through works and witness, join in issuing the invitation: "See what love God has for the world! Come, turn to God and be made whole. Come, join with our community of faith, as we follow Christ in this entrepreneurial initiative of holistic ministry. God can make a difference in your life, and your life can make a difference."

There may be some skepticism as to whether God actually calls the Church to entrepreneurial faith. There will always be some who object to using a business term in connection with ministry. When one is challenged by those who argue that God can do God's work perfectly well without all this entrepreneurial talk, then the discussion needs to turn to the world's best and first entrepreneur, Jesus. As followers of Jesus, believers are to take on the character of Jesus and to partner him in ministry to God on behalf of the world. With that, Christians need to take on some of the attributes of entrepreneurial faith. There are some characteristics worth mentioning in describing the makeup of a theological entrepreneur.

The first is enthusiasm. Jesus was enthusiastic about his ministry and mission here on earth. It would be great if the Church would wake up from its slumber and be more enthusiastic about ministry. The literal meaning of the Greek phrase *en theos* is "full of God." In the context of ministry, as it has been argued in this paper, entrepreneurs need to be filled to overflowing with the love of God in taking care of the business of faith.

The second characteristic of a theological entrepreneur is innovation. In the current technological age, innovation is very important. Innovation is a new process based on study and experimentation; a new way of doing something that is ahead of the times and translates knowledge into growth or social well-being. The Church, just like scientific, technological, organizational, financial, and commercial organizations, also needs to be innovative. Innovation must encompass the spiritual arena as well as these other areas of life.

One example of an innovator in the business world is the telecommunications giant, Nokia. Nokia has been known across the years as a leader in innovation and technology. It has been known as a company that is a trendsetter and strategic in its goals. It has evolved primarily by responding to market forces with successful strategies that have fostered innovation with such products as the mobile phone. Nokia is a company that is synonymous with changing the future. The company has developed a vision of how the physical world will fuse with the digital world in the future through mobile technologies, and it has done a pretty good job of attaining that vision, to say the least.

In like manner, the Church is synonymous with changing the future. The Church needs to develop a vision of how it can be innovative and minister to the whole person using all of the technological resources that are available. Some churches have already leveraged technology and have become very innovative in using technology. For example, some churches use social networking tools as Facebook and Twitter to provide streaming feeds of their worship experiences. The Church needs to do more of this if it is to think outside of the four walls of the church, outside of the community surrounding it, and globally.

In pushing the conversation about the global aspect of ministry of the church of the future, Marquardt and Berger associate the following attributes with people who have a global mindset:

- They are not exclusive, but inclusive.
- They have a highly developed capacity to conceptualize the complexity of global organizations.
- They are extremely flexible.
- They are sensitive to cultural diversity.

- They think globally, having a "unifying global vision."[1]

Jesus had a global mindset. While his contemporaries were entangled in a caustic dispute about whether the proper place to worship was Jerusalem or Samaria, he announced that the time had come when the correct answer was "none of the above." In Jesus' view, geography is no longer a consideration (Jn 4:20-24). He taught his followers that they would inherit the earth (Mt 5:5). He called them the "salt of the earth," not merely the salt of Palestine (Mt 5:13). His prayer was for a kingdom on earth as it is in heaven (Mt 6:10). He commanded his followers to make students of all nations (Mt 28:18-20). These references and many more demonstrate that Jesus had a global perspective, and that the church of the future in this conversation about innovation must be able to encompass the entire globe.

Further, any analysis of innovation must also include technology. They go hand in hand. There was no greater innovator and technologist than Jesus. Without a doubt, looking at Jesus as a technologist is the most difficult and questionable association to make. People do not usually connect Jesus and technology. Ken Anderson has published a book called *Where to Find it in the Bible* that relates modern topics to the biblical text. In over 3,700 entries, there is no mention of technology. Jesus lived in a world that did not have computers, microwaves, satellites, fiber optic cables, cellular phones, or the Internet. His world did not even have electricity. So, the "disconnect" between Jesus and technology should not be surprising. Yet technology is extremely important for global entrepreneurial leadership in this context. According to Marquardt and Berger, technology allows organizations to "democratize the strategy creation process by tapping

[1] Marquardt and Berger, *Global Leaders for the 21st Century*, 22.

the imagination of hundreds, if not thousands, of new voices in the strategy process."[2] Today's technology enables organizations to turn their strategic planning into a global process, a process can occupy the same or less time as one that depends on face-to-face interaction, but with the added benefit that it can incorporate the input of leaders who are located around the globe.

Perhaps the most important contribution Jesus has made to the topic of technology is that he provided a foundation for evaluating the social and spiritual implications of its use. Many business experts recognize the value of the intangible realities of an organization.[3] Yet too many organizations make the mistake of believing that all problems can be resolved through a technological solution. Technology can become a hollow substitute for the intangible fire that ignites the potential of the global organism called the church. In an age that worships technology, Jesus is a voice of caution and a voice that reminds people that organizational effectiveness begins in the human heart. Making these connections between the technological and human dimensions of an organization requires an ability to see the entire system, something else that Jesus did well.

Jesus was also an innovative systems thinker. Organizations are made up of many elements that interact with one another to produce an overall effect; how well these various elements align themselves with one another determines whether that effect is

[2] Marquardt and Berger, *Global Leaders for the 21st Century*, 29.

[3] Ibid., 33.

good or bad.[4] Systems thinkers are people who are able to picture in their minds the interrelatedness of the parts. They not only see the forest, but they understand the contribution of each tree to the formation of that forest.

Jesus often drew connections between events and issues that others could not see. After he miraculously fed the five thousand near the Sea of Galilee as recorded in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John, the crowd became adamant that they would make him their king. Jesus knew their riotous devotion was based solely on his satisfaction of their physical hunger. He made the connection between that event and the ancient Hebrews who were miraculously fed by the manna that came from heaven. They too became a riotous mob in spite of all that God had done for them (Nm 11:4-6). He then goes on to make another connection between his own mission and the manna that came from heaven, saying, "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is my flesh" (Jn 6:51). This passage also illustrates the way Jesus was able to frame individual circumstances into the structure of prophecy (Mt 13:14). He also saw patterns in the resistance of the Jewish authorities (Mt 23:29) and he envisioned a dynamic network of global leaders rather than a rigid hierarchy (Mt 13:18-19; Jn 15:5). As a systems thinker, Jesus helped his disciples to see the big picture (Jn 4:35), a picture that included the internal as well as the external dimensions of human interaction.

A third characteristic of a theological entrepreneur is the ability to "fail forward." John C. Maxwell develops this idea in his book, *Failing Forward: Turning Mistakes into*

[4] David Nadler and Michael Tushman, *Navigating Change* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Press, 1998), 23.

Stepping Stones for Success. Maxwell believes "the difference between average people and achieving people is their perception of and response to failure."[5] The Church cannot be afraid to fail. In fact, entrepreneurs by nature will fail. When difficulties arise in life, the Church must turn them into stepping stones. For the entrepreneurial church, failure is not only an option; it is expected. The church of the future does not, of course, try to fail. But neither does it run from opportunities where they might fail, even when the possibility of failure seems to others to be remarkably high. The church of the future moves forward, and if things do not work out, they learn from failure, build on it, and grow from it. Success does not mean avoiding failure. Success for the entrepreneurial church is not giving up. Those who are still standing when the bell rings will be victorious through Jesus.

A fourth characteristic of a theological entrepreneur is the ability to reach out with humility. One can learn a lot from Jesus in this regard, as he is the ultimate entrepreneur in reaching out in humility. One of God's easiest jobs is to keep people humble. One of God's most challenging jobs is to make people believe that they are worth something. When people fail, they often feel worthless. But God in God's infinite wisdom does not want people to feel defeated. He only wants them to know a healthy humility that they can learn from God's son, Jesus Christ.

A fifth characteristic is prayerfulness. Prayer is so important in the life of an entrepreneur, as it was in the life of Jesus. The Church often simply goes through the motions of prayer without believing that it works. Prayer is the most powerful force in

[5] John C. Maxwell, *Failing Forward: Turning Mistakes into Stepping Stones for Success* (Atlanta: Maxwell Motivation, Inc., 2000), 47.

the world. A good example of prayer can be attributed to Solomon at the dedication of the Temple, who understood the need from prayer and who experienced the power of prayer in the building and the dedication of the temple. Moses is another example of a spiritual entrepreneur who used the power of prayer to work on the behalf of God in releasing the people of God from bondage in Egypt. Through his consistent prayer time with God and through his attitude of prayer, God gave Moses the courage and wisdom that he needed to lead God's people out of Egypt.

A sixth characteristic is the ability to take risks. As discussed in Chapter 3 in developing the leadership framework of an entrepreneur, Jesus was the greatest risk-taker of all. Believers have to be willing to have faith and take risks. When believers live the life of a spiritual entrepreneur, it is never a safe feeling being out there. Faith is the key to stepping out and remaining there to obey God's call in service to him on behalf of the world. Entrepreneurs not only seek out new opportunities, but they take action once the opportunity becomes clear. While some may analyze every aspect, run risk assessments, and crunch numbers until their eyes glaze over, entrepreneurs, to quote a famous brand of athletic shoe, "just do it."

Entrepreneurs understand that opportunities are fleeting. Waiting until everything is just right will often guarantee that the opportunity disappears before one decides to take action. And if there is still a chance to seize the opportunity, one may find that it is now more complex or more costly than it would have been if action had been taken much sooner. Entrepreneurs value moving forward and this often means taking risks. This is not to say that one should rush into situations blindly or that one should avoid doing the right amount of research before a project is committed to. But being an entrepreneur is

like being an explorer—there are no guarantees about what is ahead, except that it will be exciting.

As the church of the future responds to needs in new and creative ways, it must continue to embrace entrepreneurial faith in order to reach the hungry and underserved of its community. If today's believers are ever to "be" the Church rather than simply "doing the business" of the Church, then entrepreneurial faith is no longer optional. This is not an idea that began in the seventeenth century. The book of Acts illustrates the early Church involved in the needs of the surrounding community. If the Church today were really being the Church and fulfilling its mission as set forth in Acts, if it was taking the sanctuary to the streets, there would be less crime and violence in the nation's towns and cities. Fewer people would be living without direction in their lives, resorting to drugs or gangs. There would be fewer homeless people. Getting involved in the community is not just a nice idea. It is not optional. The Church exists just for this.

If the Church is to see the paralyzed in its communities walk again, it must become entrepreneurial. It will become a matter of survival very soon. Churches that refuse to become entrepreneurial by reaching beyond the sanctuary walls with the gospel will simply fade away. The vision of the Church of the future in all of its power comes from the Holy Spirit. Through the power of the Holy Spirit comes the vision of what God wants the Church to be—the Church of the future.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alvord, Sarah H. and Brown, L. David and Letts, Christine W. *Social Entrepreneurship: Leadership that Facilitates Societal Transformation – An Exploratory Study.* Boston: Center for Public Leadership, 2003.

Ammerman, Nancy. *Congregation and Community.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997.

Ammerman, Nancy, Jackson W.Carroll, Carl S Dudley, and William McKinney. *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook.* Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.

Anderson, Ray S. *The Soul of Ministry.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.

_____. *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001.

Bakke, Ray and Sam Roberts. *The Expanded Mission of Urban Churches.* Chicago: International Urban Associates, 1998.

_____. *A Theology as Big as the City.* Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1997.

Barger, Rick. *A New and Right Spirit*. Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2005.

Barker, Joel Arthur. *Future Edge*. New York: William Morrow, 1992.

Barna, George. *African Americans and Their Faith* (national random sample of 800 Black adults). Oxnard, CA: The Barna Group, 1999.

_____. *High Impact African American Churches.* Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2004.

Barna Research Group, "Twentysomethings Struggle to Find Their Place in Christian Churches," September 24, 2003. www.barna.org (accessed March 2, 2011).

Benefiel, Ron. *Urban Imperative* Video. Kansas City, MO: Mission Strategy USA/Canada, 2004.

Billingsley, Andrew. *Mighty Like a River.* New York: Oxford Press, 1999.

Blackaby, Henry T. *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People to God's Agenda*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001.

Bornstein, David. *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas*, rev. ed. Huntington Beach, CA: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Bosch, David. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1992.

Briner, Bob and Ray Pritchard. *The Leadership Lesson of Jesus*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1997.

Bruggeman, Walter. *Prophetic Imagination.* Philadelphia*:* Fortress Press, 1978.

Burns, James E. *Leadership.* New York: Harper & Row, 1978.

Caldwell, Kirbyjohn. *The Gospel of Good Success.* New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999.

Campolo, Tony. *Speaking My Mind*. Nashville: W. Publishing Group, 2004.

Cladis, George. *Leading the Team-Based Church.* New York: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

Clay, Eric. "Faith-Based and Local Economic Development: Implications for Planning Theory at the Boundaries of the Market and the State." Cornell University publication, New York, 1996.

Clinton, Robert. *The Bible and Leadership Values*. Pasadena, CA: Barnabas Publishers, 1993.

Covey, Stephen R. *The 8th Habit*. New York: Free Press, 2004.

Dennison, Jack. *City Reaching: On the Road to Community Transformation.* Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999.

DePree, Max. *Leadership Jazz.* New York: Doubleday, 1992.

_____. *Leading without Power*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997

Driver, John. *Images of the Church in Mission.* Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997.

Dudley, Carl D. *Basic Steps toward Community Ministry*. Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute, 1991.

Franklin, Robert M. *Another Day's Journey: Black Churches Confronting the American Crisis*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.

Fray, Harold R., Jr. *Conflict and Change in the Church*. Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1969.

Gangel, Kenneth. *Lesson in Leadership from the Bible*. Indianapolis: BMH Books, 1980.

Goatley, David Emanuel. *The Collected Essays of J. Deotis Roberts: Black Religion, Black Theology*. New York: Trinity Press International, 2003.

Gornik, Mark. *Small Changes, Big Differences: Setting the Foundation of a New Community*. Baltimore: New Song Community Church, 1996.

Graves, Mike. *What's the Matter with Preaching Today?* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004.

Greenleaf, Robert. *Servant Leadership.* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2002.

Guns, Geoffrey V. *Spiritual Leadership: A Practical Guide for Today's Church Leaders.* Lithonia, GA: Orman Press, 2000.

Harper, Nile. *Urban Churches: Vital Signs*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999.

Harris, Forrest E., Sr. *Ministry for Social Crisis: Theology and Praxis in the Black Tradition.* Atlanta: Mercer University Press, 1993.

Harris, James H. *Preaching Liberation.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

_____. *The Courage to Lead, Leadership in the African American Urban Church*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002.

Hayward, Steven F. *Churchill on Leadership.* Rocklin, CA: Prima, 1997.

Hesselbein, Frances, Goldman, Marshall and Beckhard, Richard. *The Leader of the Future*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997.

Jones, Laurie Beth. *Jesus, CEO*. New York: Hyperion, 1995.

Keener, Greg and Glenn Usry. *Defending Black Faith: Answers to Tough Questions about African American Christianity.* Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1997.

Keller, Timothy J. *Ministries of Mercy: The Call of the Jericho Road,* 2nd ed. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1997.

Kotter, John. *Leading Change.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Press, 1996.

Kouzes, James M. and Posner, Barry Z. *The Leadership Challenge.* New York: Warner Books, 1994.

Lincoln, C. Eric and Lawrence Mamiya. *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990.

Linthicum, Robert. *Transforming Power: Biblical Strategies for Making a Difference in Your Community*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

Lowry, Glenn. *One by One from the Inside Out.* New York: Freedom Press, 1995.

Marquardt, Michael and Nancy Berger. *Global Leaders for the 21st Century.* New York: State University of New York Press, 2000.

Massey, Floyd, Jr., and Samuel Berry McKinney. *Church Administration in the Black Perspective.* Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1976.

Maxwell, John. *Developing the Leader within You.* Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993.

_____. *Failing Forward: Turning Mistakes into Stepping Stones for Success.* Atlanta: Maxwell Motivation, Inc., 2000.

McMickle, Marvin. *Where Have All the Prophets Gone?* Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2006.

McNeal, Reggie. *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009.

Moltmann, Jurgen.*The Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.

Mowry, Kathryn. "Do Good Fences Make Good Neighbors? Toward a Theology of Welcome for the Urban Church," in *God So Loves the City*, ed. Charles Van Engen and Jude Tiersma. Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1994.

Nadler, David and Tushman, Michael. *Navigating Change.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Press, 1998.

Owen, Michael and R. Drew Smith. "Congregations in Low-Income Neighborhoods and the Implications for Social Welfare Policy Research," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (September 2005).

Perkins, James K. *Building Up Zion's Walls*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1999.

Perkins, John M. *Restoring At-risk Communities: Doing It Together and Doing It Right*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995.

Powers, Bruce P. *Christian Leadership*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman Co., 1997.

Putnam, Robert. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.

Putnam, Robert and Lewis Feldstein. *Better Together: Restoring the American Community.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 2003.

Reed, Gregory. *Economic Empowerment through the Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Press, 1994.

Roberts, J. Deotis. *Africentric Christianity: A Theological Appraisal for Ministry*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2000.

_____. *The Prophethood of Black Believers.* Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994.

_____. *The Social Teachings of Black Churches*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.

Roberts, Samuel K. *African American Christian Ethics.* Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2001.

Roxburgh, Alan J. and Fred Romanuk. *The Missional Leader.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006.

Schaller, Lyle E. *Getting Things Done*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993.

Schumpeter, Joseph A. *The Theory of Economic Development: An Inquiry into Profits, Capital, Credit, Interest and Business Cycle.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934.

Sherman, Amy L. *Restorers of Hope.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997.

Sider, Ronald. *Churches That Make a Difference.* Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002.

Smith, J. Alfred, Sr. *On the Jericho Road*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2004.

Stewart, Carlyle. *African American Church Growth*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994.

Swanson, Eric. *Ten Paradigm Shifts toward Community Transformation.* Dallas: Leadership Network, 2003.

Volf, Miroslav. *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*. Grand Rapids: Eardmans, 1998.

Wallis, Jim. *The Soul of Politics*. New York: The New Press, 1994.

_____. *Faith Works: How to Live Your Beliefs and Ignite Positive Social Change*. New York: Random House, 2000.

Warren, Rachele and Warren, Donald. *The Neighborhood Organizers Handbook.* Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 1977.

Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Church.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995.

Watson, Goodwin. *Social Psychology: Issues and Insights.* New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1972.

White, John. *Excellence in Leadership*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986.

Wilkes, C. Gene. *Jesus on Leadership*. Chicago: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1998.

Wills, Garry. *Certain Trumpets: The Nature of Leadership*. New York: Touchstone, 1994.

Woolfe, Lorin. *The Bible on Leadership*. New York: AMACOM, 2002.